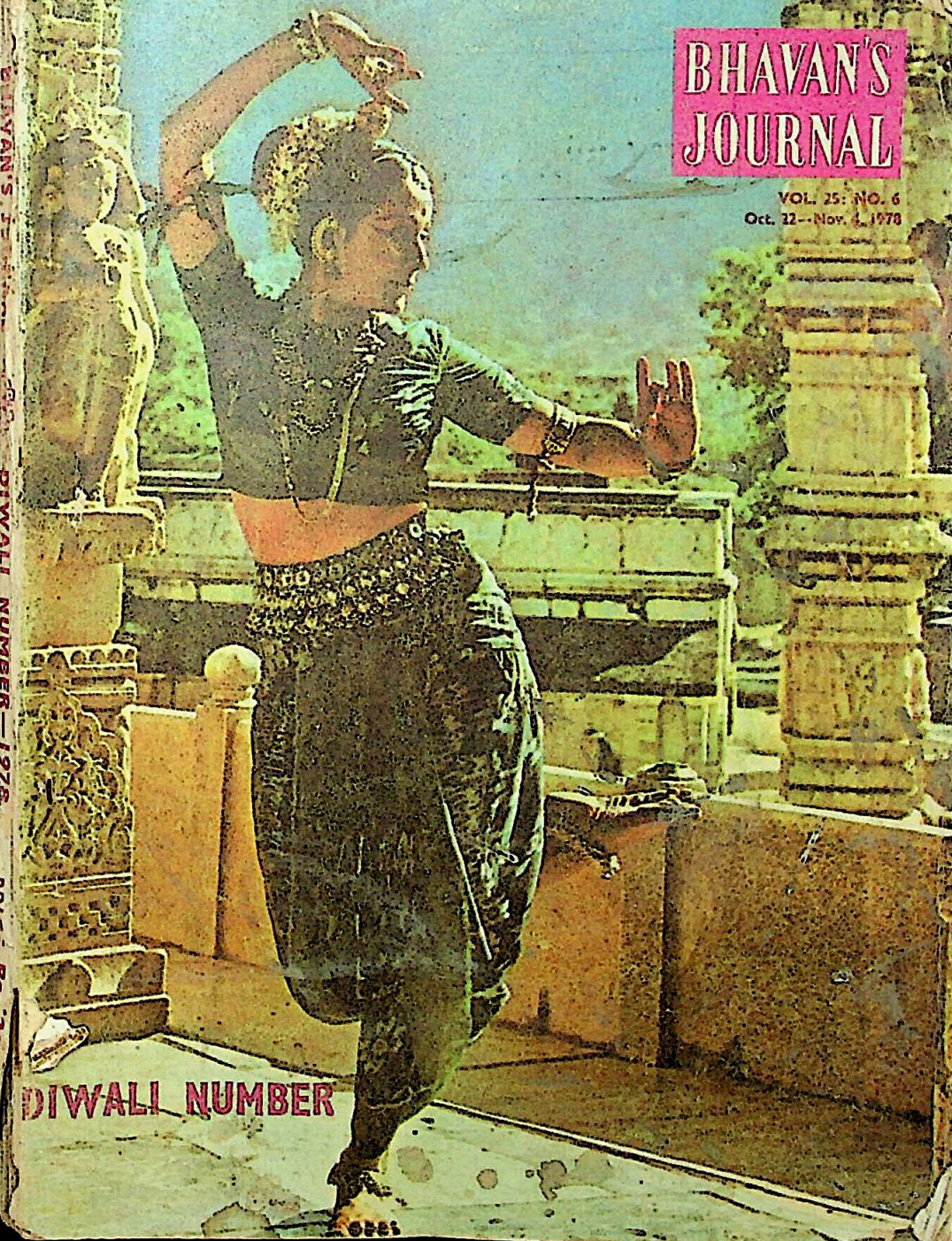


# BHAVAN'S JOURNAL

VOL. 25: NO. 6  
Oct. 22--Nov. 4, 1978

DIWALI NUMBER





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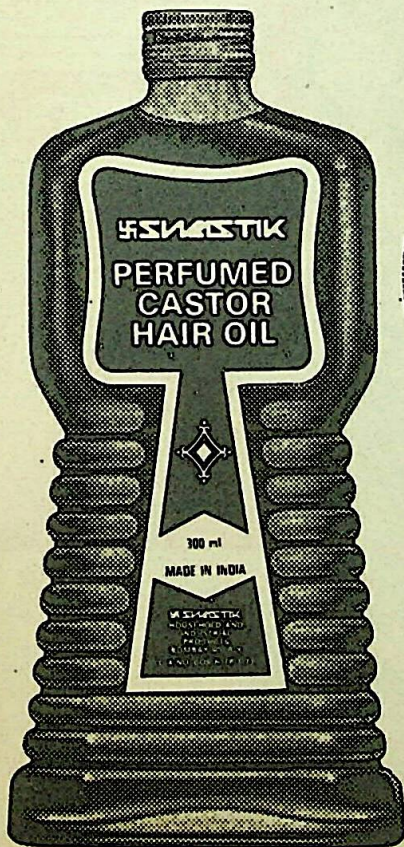
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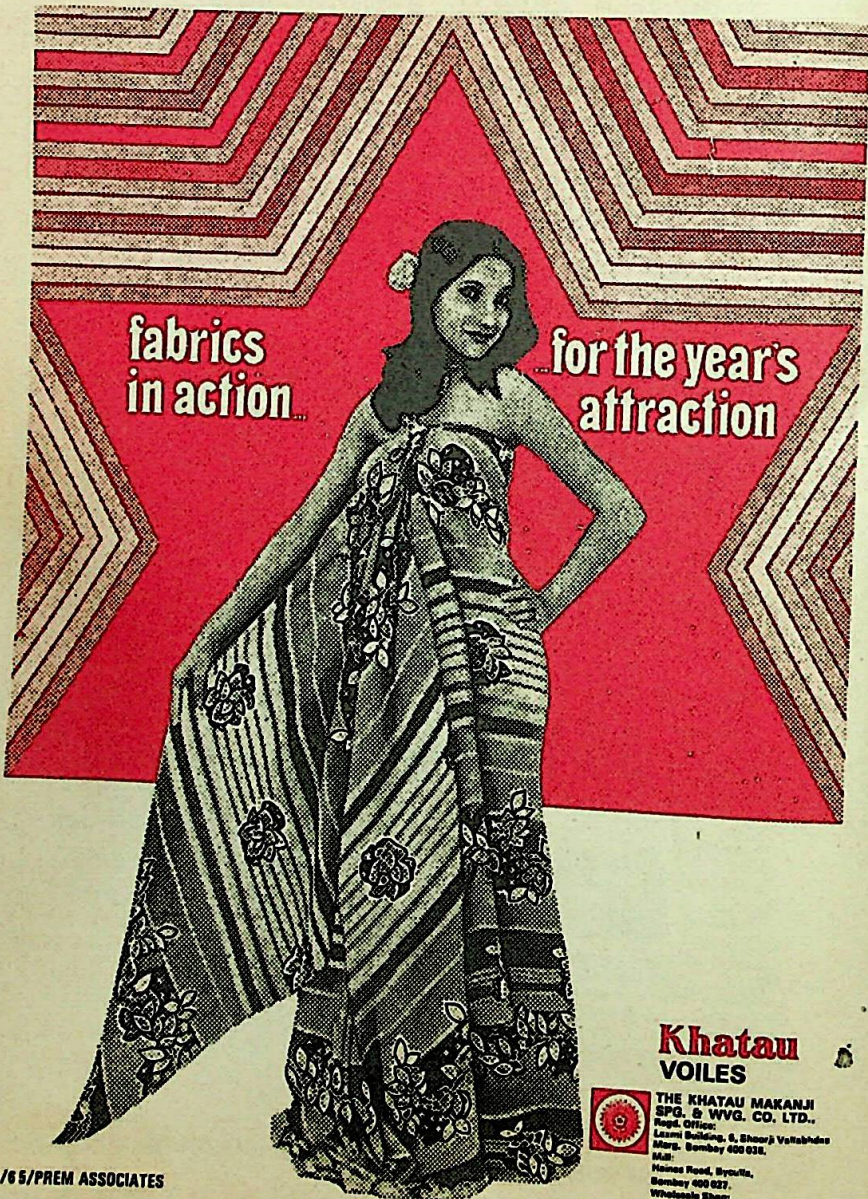
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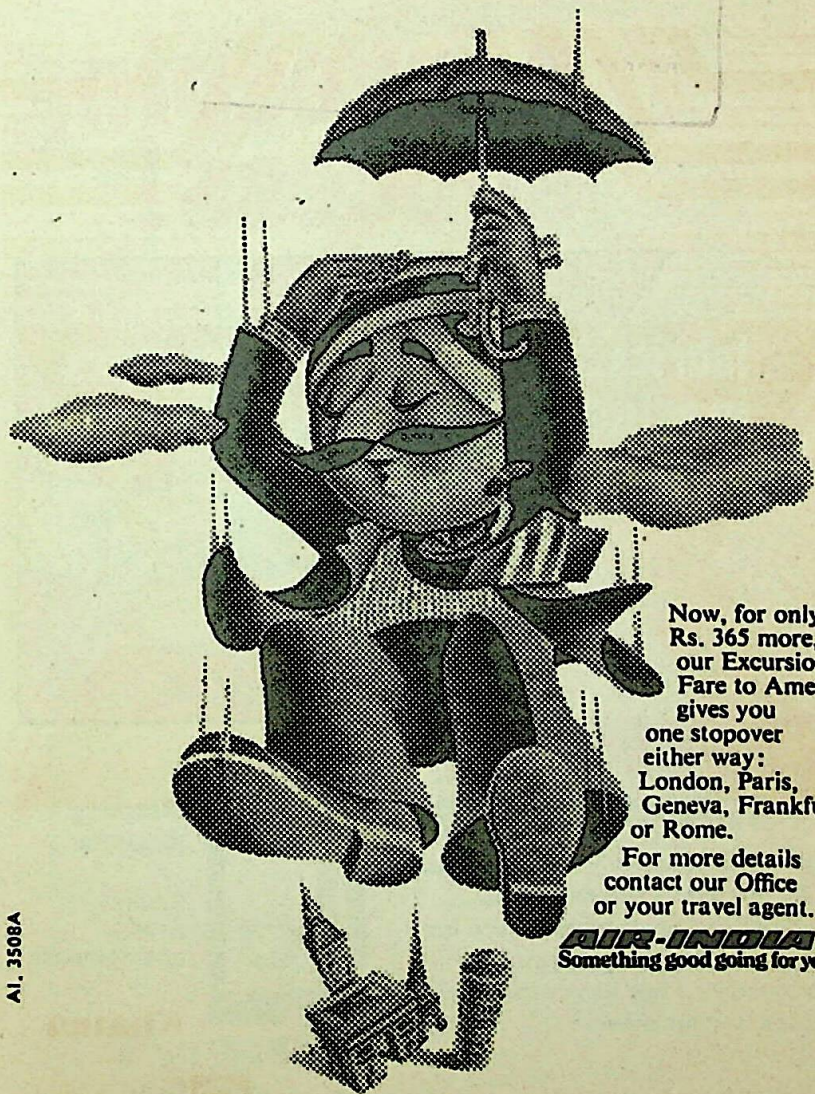
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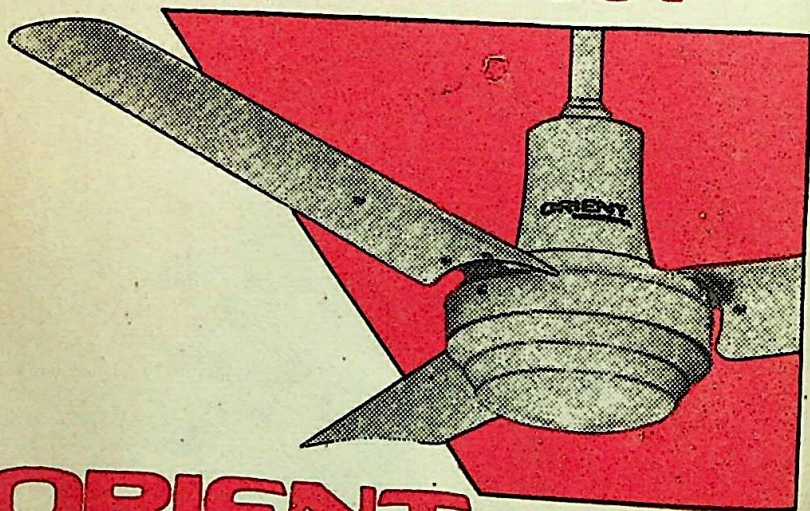
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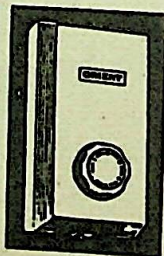


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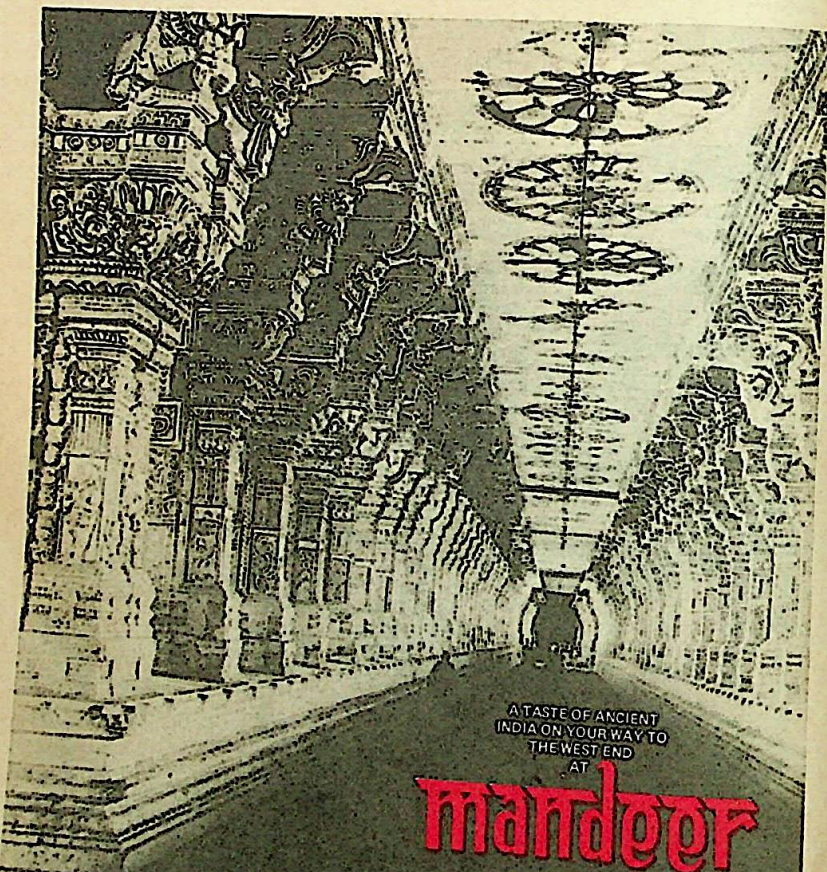


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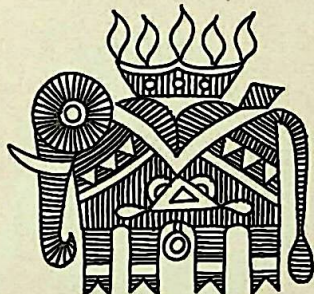
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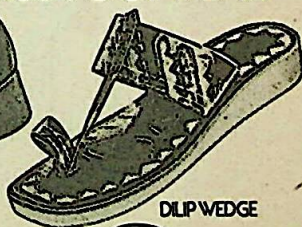


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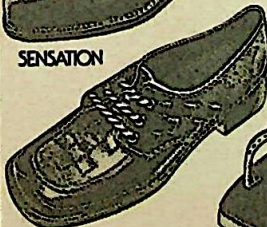
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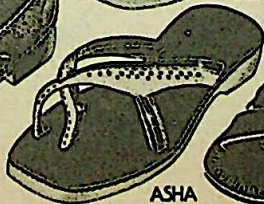
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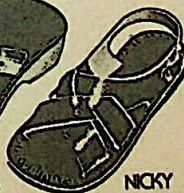
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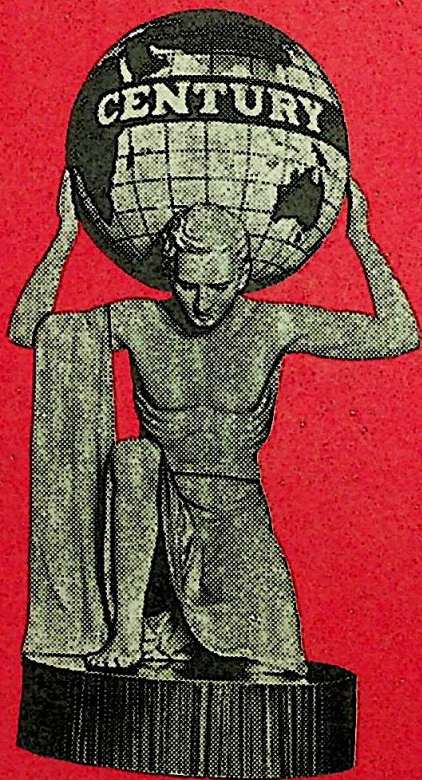
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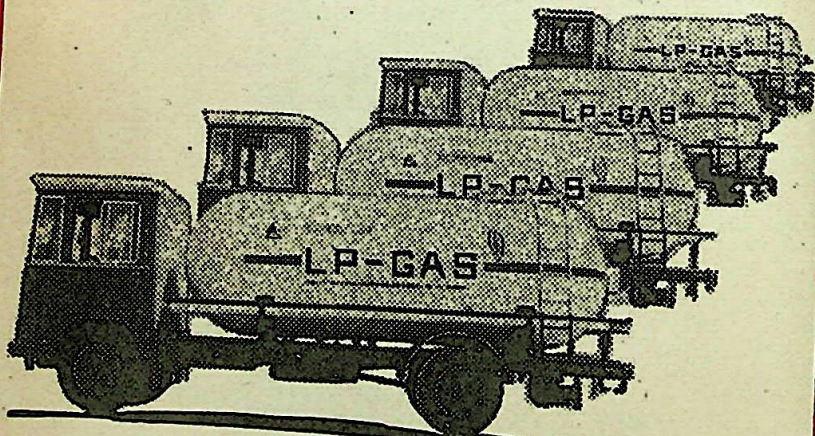
—The Mother.  
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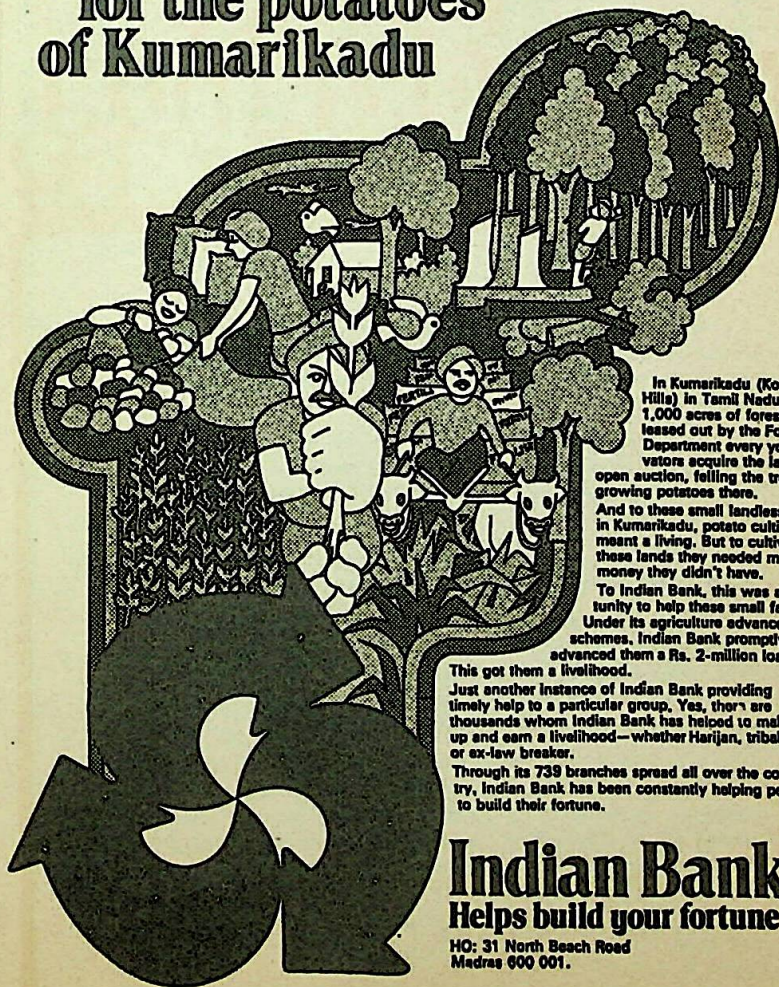
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**PRIME MINISTER**

## MESSAGE

Although every child has a right to expect proper care and attention from his parents by way of food, clothing, education and health, millions of our children are left to grow on their own without the benefit of parental care and attention.

No parents would want to neglect their children. But when there are many children to look after, parents just find themselves unable to provide them with even the bare necessities of life. The children suffer. The parents suffer. The nation suffers.

Therefore the growth of population has to be controlled in order that a perceptible share of the fruits of development becomes available to the people.

Family Planning thus acquires the most urgent priority. We have to approach every family particularly those in our villages and persuade it to adopt measures of birth control which we devised for their welfare. It is for us in Government, and in voluntary agencies to launch a movement to convince people about the continuous need for family planning.

I hope the National Family Welfare Fortnight which is being observed in the second half of October will help in carrying the message of family planning to the remotest villages to accelerate the pace of progress of the National Welfare Programme. I send my best wishes on this occasion and appeal to all sections of our society to help in this national endeavour.

New Delhi  
August 24, 1978

*Morarji Deesai*





*No society can possibly  
be built on a denial of  
individual freedom.*

*It is contrary to the very  
nature of man...*

*In reality even those who  
do not believe in the  
liberty of the individual  
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—MAHATMA GANDHI.



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OCTOBER 22, 1978.



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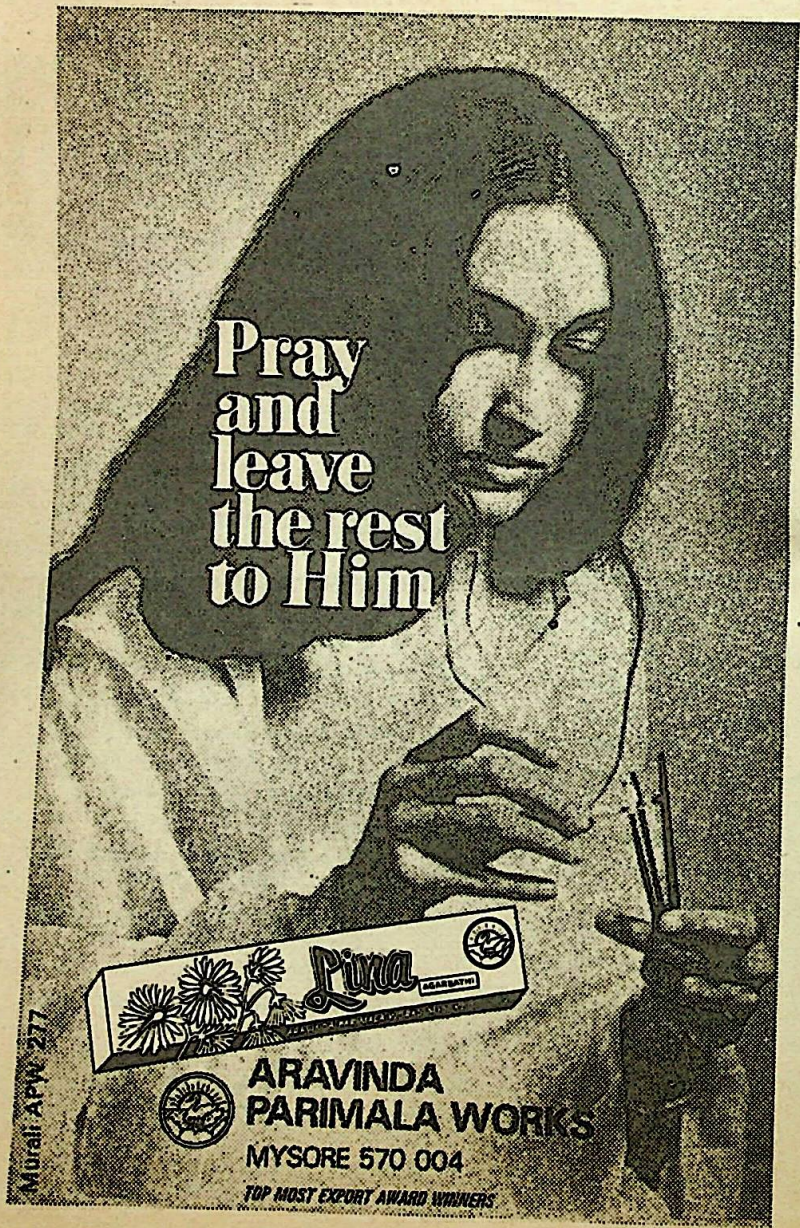
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FRONT COVER : A MARMOREAL POSE

Trans: Kaushal Bhargava





Pray  
and  
leave  
the rest  
to Him

Murali APW 277

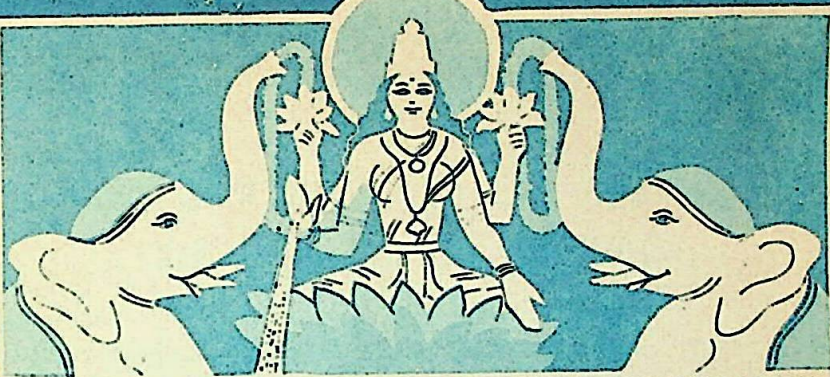


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LET NOBLE THOUGHTS COME TO US FROM EVERY SIDE.

*Rigveda I-39-i*

## PRAYER TO MOTHER DEVI

कदम्बवनमध्यर्गा कनकमण्डलोपस्थितां  
षड्भुजहवासिनीं सततसिद्धसाधामिनीम् ।  
विदम्बितजपावर्चं विकचचन्द्रचूडमणि  
त्रिलोचनकुटुम्बिनीं त्रिपुरसुन्दरीमाश्रये ॥

I seek refuge in Goddess Tripura-sundari who is the consort of the three-eyed God (Siva), who dwells at the centre of the Kadamba forest, who has her place in the golden solar region with her abode in six lotuses, who is an eternal lightning to the accomplished seekers, who by her body lustre resembles Japa flower and who bears the radiant moon as the head ornament.

—Sankara's "Tripurasundaristava," 4.

VOL. No. 25

**BHAVAN'S  
JOURNAL**

NUMBER 6



## **HOW MANY MILES MUST A MAN WALK DOWN BEFORE THEY CAN CALL HIM A MAN!**

Many many miles! Actually a lot of Indians have walked many miles in their lives with firm determination and an ardent desire to achieve their objectives. Great men like valiant Rajendra Chola, erudite Asutosh Mukherjee, Jagatguru Shankaracharya and many others have become illustrious names in their own fields, be it religion, philosophy, art, music or science.

NBT's National Biography series presents the eventful lives of such luminaries and provides inspiring reading material for readers of all ages. Some recent titles in this series include NAGARJUNA by K. Satchidananda Murthy, MAHAVIRA by J. C. Jain, THE MOTHER by Prema Nandakumar and RAMANA MAHARSHI by K. Swaminathan.

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## **NATIONAL BOOK TRUST (INDIA)**





## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Our heartiest Diwali Greetings to all "Bhavan's Journal" readers!

Some think that Indians are pessimistic in their outlook and approach to life. The Diwali festival alone is sufficient repudiation of this wrong notion.

Diwali is a festival of joy. It has its religious, social, cultural and convivial aspects. It is a festival looked forward to eagerly in every Indian household everywhere in the world.

Diwali is a time to demonstrate to others that we genuinely care for them and love them and vice versa.

The mother does it in her own way by preparing sweets and in a thousand other ways. The father does this by bringing new clothes and crackers and giving the home a new look.

The significance of Diwali greetings which is the Indian equivalent of X'mas Greetings is that we express our love and regard for others on the Day.

And we in the Bhavan show that we care for you by selecting with great diligence the contents that go to make up the Diwali Number of the "Bhavan's Journal."

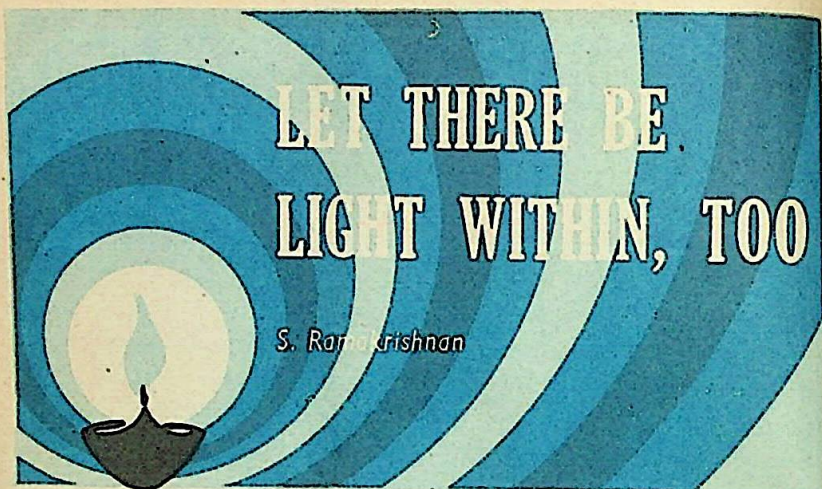
Indeed 1978 Diwali Number is designed to make your Diwali a richer and fuller festival—a festival of joy and fulfilment.

A Happy Diwali to all.

*M. K. Khanna*

President





**THE** whirligig of Time has ushered in another Diwali—the Festival of Lights. In the midst of glittering illumination outside, there is thickening darkness inside.

India is facing hard times.

Centrifugal forces, group sentiments and linguistic fanaticism threaten to submerge our nationalism, impair our age-old cultural unity and desecrate our very Way of Life.

Our economy is in great strain.

Strikes and lockouts, intimidation and violence, are menacingly on the prowl.

Population explosion continues unabated.

Love of ease, less work and more pay have become the credo of most working people in all fields of national endeavour.

Love of wealth with utter disregard for quality and honesty has become the creed of most businessmen and industrialists.

Love of power and position has become the craze of most public men. Power and position meant for public service are being misused for self-aggrandisement.

The institutional structure of our society itself is disintegrating. The family bond is becoming weak among large sections of our men and women. Marriage is losing its sanctity. The moral authority exercised from time immemorial by parents, elders, teachers, public men, and religious and social institutions is crumbling.





How shall we stem the rot, reverse the ugly trend? How shall we preserve and nurture our national character, our precious inheritance?

This can be done only by a determined and *sincere* effort at reconstruction of our individual and national life:

—through an appropriate system of education based on the Gospel of the Dirty Hand and training in the *practice* of ethical and spiritual values;

—through the institution of inviolable marriages and reactivated family bonds, the two nurseries of self-discipline;

—through reordering of the economic system and re-adjusting capital-managerial-labour relations on the basis of *asteya*, i.e., self-imposed trusteeship of *all* wealth—material, managerial, intellectual and physical.

Confucius, one of the sentinels of Eastern Wisdom, has said:

“The ancients, who wished to preserve the clear and good character of the world, first set about to regulate their national life. In order to regulate their national life, they cultivated their family life. In order to cultivate their family life, they rectified their personal life. In order to rectify their personal life, they elevated their heart. In order to elevate their heart, they made their will sincere. In order to make their will sincere, they enlightened their mind.”

To enlighten our mind, we must once again expose ourselves to the energizing light of our ageless culture. We must hearken to the Call of the Vedas, listen to the Message of the Upanishads, learn the morals of our Epics and Puranas, and make our sages and saints, ancient and modern, continuously speak to and guide us from the cradle to the grave.

In sum, we must ceaselessly foster moral and spiritual values, the foundation of enduring achievement.

As Arnold Bennet has said: “The manner in which one single ray of light... will clarify and energise the whole mental life of him who receives it, is among the most wonderful and heavenly of intellectual phenomena.”

Let us celebrate Diwali not only by illuminating the outside, but also by illuminating the inside, by enlightening our minds—giving unto ourselves intellectual, moral and spiritual light, which alone is eternal and everlasting.

Affectionate Diwali Greetings to all our dear readers.

□ □ □





# Our Religion

JAGADGURU SRI CHANDRASEKHARENDRA SARASWATI



**THERE** are many religions in the world today. Each has a name of its own. These names are personal and they indicate that the founders of these religions were personages of great holiness. They had the power to attract many men to their way of thinking. They acquired a large following.

If an English-educated youth belonging to our religion is asked

what his religion is, he would reply that he professes the 'Hindu' religion. Go to a village and ask a peasant what his religion is. He will not be able to give a name to his religion. The name 'Hinduism' which is used now to denote our religion was unknown to our ancestors and is also unknown to the common man among us.

What then is the name that is given to our religion? The fact is that our religion has no name. This may appear to be strange. But there is nothing strange about it. Just consider. When and why is a name given to a thing? We give a name to a thing when there are more than one of the same kind and to distinguish one from the other or others. If there is one only of a thing, there is no need to give it a name.

The same is the case with our religion. Other religions did not exist before the time of their founders. Ours is a religion which existed long before the founded religions. Obviously, it was the only religion in the



world ministering to the spiritual needs of mankind as a whole. There was no second religion from which it was required to be distinguished. Hence, there was no need for a name for it. It was, and even now continues to be nameless.

We have no evidence as to when our religion 'began.'

Obviously, it did not 'begin' at a particular time. It must be said to be beginningless. It has been existing always. It is *sanatana*. The nearest Sanskrit word for religion is *dharma*, though *dharma* signifies much more than religion.

Our religion cannot be named after a founder; for there was no founder for it. So, if at all it is necessary to give a name to our religion, it can only be called *sanatana dharma* or the eternal religion.

From "Aspects of Our Religion"  
—a Bhavan's publication.



*Even as Vishnu is the form of Siva, so Siva is of the nature of Vishnu. Let me have that blessing in life, by which I perceive not any difference, no distinction, between Siva and Kesava.*

—Skandopanishad

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**THOUGH** we got human embodiments on innumerable occasions in the course of this beginningless phenomenal life, what benefit have we reaped therefrom? Did we make any effort to secure permanent happiness? Or did we make any effort to eradicate misery altogether?



# Wasted Opportunities

JAGADGURU SRI CHANDRASEKHARA BHARATI

If we urge the excuse now that, as the present age is Kali, our minds are muddy, did we not have embodiments in the very pure age like Krita? Did we not have then the benefit of seeing many a great person who shared the greatness of God Himself?

Why should we go as far as the Krita Yuga? Have not many sages appeared as incarnations of God even in this age of Kali and have we not seen them? Have we not drunk from their gracious lips their sacred teachings sweet and invigorating as nectar? Were not those words capable of acting as boats to

take to the other shore the people drowning in the ocean of phenomenal life infested with countless alligators known as troubles?

In spite of such supreme help, did we reach the goal of life? Did we make any attempt to stem the current of our minds which were branching away as they liked? Did we make the slightest effort to tread, as far as it was possible for us, the path that they so kindly showed to us?

We did nothing of the sort. We were content to live on just as we were born. We contracted, however, the craze for gold



*Consider for a moment the attitude of the modern man, however educated he may claim to be. Does his daily conduct bear out that he believes in a future birth, a future loka, or even in God? Why does the craze for pleasure increase day by day as if all enjoyment must be had now or never? How is the belief in a future state of experience consistent with the growing neglect of dharma? What justification is there for the increase in the number of law-courts and Registration offices if the people believe in God, the Eternal Witness of all their transactions?*

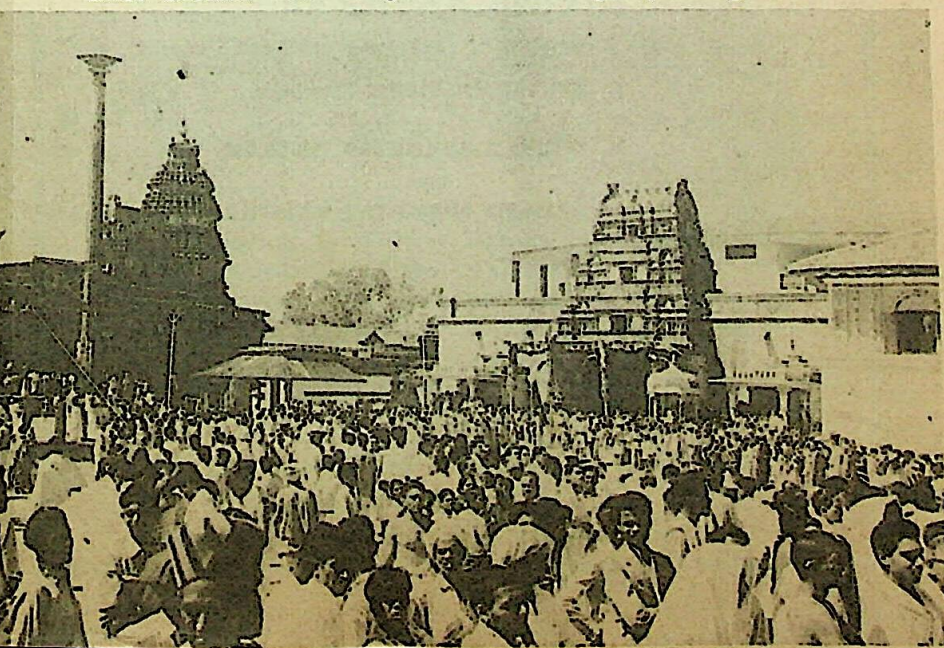
and in pursuit of the same roamed about in all directions. We wandered as we liked, without caring for our caste, our laws, our family or our stage in life.

We forgot that the sensual objects were pleasant and cool only like the shade under the hissing hood of an angry serpent and we sought them as capable

of giving us happiness. We only enlisted ourselves on the side of Duryodhana who saw and heard the Lord in person and yet did not profit thereby.

If we go on in this reckless fashion, how are we ever to get freed from bondage? How can we ever hope to have everlasting happiness? Is it for this

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that we have got this human birth? It is far better to be an animal than to be a man making no effort to attain knowledge, for as already stated the animals have no sins and have no need to expiate them.

The ancients have said: *"This boat of a body has been purchased at a very heavy price of acquired merit. Before it becomes unfit for service, use it well and cross over to the other shore of the ocean of sorrow."* Who can be a worse fool than he who having obtained this human body so difficult to obtain and being born also as a male

is still idle and neglects his own good?

We see from passages like these that the other shore of phenomenal life is really *Brahman* itself. The temporary happiness and relief from misery which we seek after and occasionally have are common to us and the animals. If these were the highest benefits, to be sought after, we have no claim to be any better than the animals.

Courtesy: *The Call of the Jagadguru* (Sringeri), by R. Krishnaswami Aiyar; Ganesh & Co; Madras-17.

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Swamiji had high praise for the Indian working class people, because they are cultured, refined beings, though poor and often illiterate. They are not drunkards, they are not criminals.

We do not post policemen to watch over the poor people in India, whereas, in other countries, poverty is often associated with crime. This is because spiritual culture was given to our people throughout the ages by our great saints and sages. And there is a light in their eyes, as remarked by Professor Galbraith, which one misses in the working class in many other countries in the West. As reported by Shri Shriman Narayan in his book, *Gandhi: The Man and His Thought* (pp. 39-40):

'I also recall a talk we had in the (Indian) Planning Commission with the eminent American Economist, Professor Galbraith, some years ago ... In the course of our discussion, the learned professor remarked: "... In India, I have always found some kind of a lustre in the eyes of the poor peasantry.... I have seen in the faces of the poor people in Indian villages a spirit of self-reliance and moral fortitude which, in a sense, enriches their poverty."

So, through our industrial development projects in India, let us improve the economic standard of our labour, and also raise their educational level; but let us not forget that it is spirituality alone that will raise their cultural level and make them decent human beings.

□ □ □





# THE SECRET OF SUCCESS

SWAMI  
CHINMAYANANDA

**THE** value of work is judged actions.

not by its quantum but by the quality and texture thereof. The quality of actions must improve by the ideals which guide and inspire an individual working in the world. The loftier and nobler the ideal, the greater will be the beauty of his actions and efficiency. All mighty men of superhuman achievements have, under such ideals, done wonderfully great and noble work in the world and the fruits of their actions are enjoyed by generations which follow them.

In the context of the present world, man is found wanting in a definite ideal for channelizing his activities. He works with a selfish attitude and has no goal or vision in life to inspire him to take to better and brighter

actions. He experiences monotony in any work undertaken by him—whether he be a clerk in the Secretariat or a manager of an organisation. He is fatigued no sooner than he reaches his office and begins his work and by the evening he has hardly any energy left to reach his home. In such a state of affairs, his work becomes worthless and he becomes a burden to the society.

After thorough and sustained investigations, our great Masters of the past discovered the causes for such fatigue and showed us the way to overcome them and thereby raise the standard and beauty of our activities and bring about real cheer and happiness in the world. They proved that the fatigue created by our work



is due entirely to the mental strain and stress which we, in our sheer ignorance, invite by craving desires for indulgence in sense enjoyments and ceaseless expectation of the fruits of our actions. These extroverted desires and anxieties consume the very vital in us and leave us putrefied.

*The secret of success, therefore, lies in overcoming such mental dissipation by choosing a definite and noble ideal or goal in life, working relentlessly and with dedication concentrating thereon for its achievement. Such activities, undertaken in a spirit of surrender and selflessness, lend constant inspiration and inward solace, a charm and a cheer in life and lead us to efficiency and success.*

Religion no doubt provides man with the highest ideal but he, in the context of the present competitive world and with his attention focussed only on himself and his egocentric demands, finds it impossible to revolutionise his attitudes to work. But the law of nature knows no compromise. Achievements, be they material or spiritual, can be measured only by the extent of selfless dedication. The great thinkers of this country, therefore, suggested that we choose an altar other than our own individuality, such as the welfare of our society or the growth of

our nation or any work undertaken for a larger cause, and direct all our activities towards that one goal.

Thus, religion helps us gradually to develop a broader vision and practise the art of working for a larger cause and learn to draw inspiration from our work itself; the satisfaction of a good job done selflessly is far superior to and more comforting than the impermanent joys arising out of worldly acquisitions and mere sense gratification. Success in life lies in one's own bosom, not in the world outside, and religion provides the access to it.

□ □ □

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# A SCRIPTURE OF LOVE



SRI PARAMAHANSA YOGANANDA

**I SOUGHT** love in many lives. I shed bitter tears of separation and repentance to know what love is. I sacrificed everything, all attachment and delusion, to learn at last that I am in love with Love—with God—alone. Then I drank love through all true hearts. I saw that He is the One Cosmic Lover, the One Fragrance that permeates all the variegated

blossoms of love in the garden of life.

The Lord ever silently whispers to you:

I am Love. But to experience the giving and the gift of love, I divided Myself into three: love, lover, and beloved. My love is beautiful, pure, eternally joyous; and I taste it in many ways, through many forms.



As father I drink reverential love from the spring of my child's heart. As mother I drink the nectar of unconditional love from the soul-cup of the tiny baby. As child I imbibe the protecting love of the father's righteous reason. As infant I drink causeless love from the holy grail of maternal attraction. As master I drink sympathetic love from the flask of the servant's thoughtfulness. As servant I sip respectful love from the goblet of the master's appreciation. As guru-preceptor I enjoy purest love from the chalice of the disciple's all-surrendering devotion. As friend I drink from the self-bubbling fountains of spontaneous love. As a divine friend, I quaff crystal waters of cosmic love from the reservoir of God-adoring hearts.

So My love is playing hide-and-seek in all human hearts, that each might learn to discover and worship, not the temporal human receptacles of My love, but My love itself, dancing from one heart to another.

The moon laughs at millions of well-meaning lovers who have unknowingly lied to their beloved ones: "I love you forever." Their skulls are strewn over the windswept sands of eternity. They can no longer use their breath to say, "I love you." They can neither remem-

ber nor redeem their promise to love each other forever.

Without speaking a word, I have loved you always. I alone can truly say, "I love you," for I loved you before you were born; My love gives you life and sustains you even at this moment; and I alone can love you after the gates of death imprison you where none, not even your greatest human lover, can reach you.

I am the love that dances human puppets on strings of emotions and instincts, to play the drama of love on the stage of life. My love is beautiful and endlessly enjoyable when you love it alone; but the lifeline of your peace and joy is cut when instead you become entangled in human emotion and attachment. Realize, My children, it is My love for which you yearn!

Those who love Me as only one person, or who imperfectly love Me in one person, do not know what Love is. Only they can know Love who love Me wisely, faultlessly, completely, all-surrenderingly—who love Me perfectly and equally in all, and who love Me perfectly and equally as all.

Courtesy: *Yogananda Sat-sanga Society of India: A Pictorial History.*





# Kanakadhara Stava of Adi Sankara

*Out of the dozens of poetic compositions of Sri Sankara Bhagavatpada, Kanakadhara Stava is the most popular among householders. It is recited in thousands of homes from Kanyakumari to Kashmir.*

*During the early days of his Sannyas, Sri Sankara once went to the house of a poor lady for Bhiksha.*

*All that the poor woman had was a myrobalan fruit (amalaka) which she had preserved to end her Ekadashi fast. This she readily and lovingly offered to the young ascetic.*

*The great Acharya, touched by her poverty as well as generosity, invoked the grace of Goddess Lakshmi through a poetic composition which has come to be known as "Kanakadhara Stava," literally meaning "prayer for a shower of gold." Legend has that at once there was a shower of gold amalakas from the sky.*

*The English translation by Dr. N. Gangadharan is taken from the February 1978 issue of The Voice of Sankara.*

अङ्गं हरेः पुलकभूषणमाश्रयन्ती  
मृङ्गाङ्गनेव मुकुलामरणं तमालम् ।

अङ्गीकृताखिलविभूतिरपाङ्गलीला  
माङ्गल्यदास्तु मम मङ्गलदेवतायाः ॥ १ ॥

May the sportive glances of the  
auspicious goddess (Lakshmi),  
which, as the she-bee resting on

a Tamala tree replete with  
buds, resort to the body of Lord  
Hari bedecked with horripilation  
(got because of happiness) and  
which have all the riches, be the  
bestowers of auspiciousness unto  
me.





मग्धा मुहुर्विदधती वदने मुरारेः

प्रेमवपाप्रणिहितानि गतागतानि ।

माला दृशोर्मधुकरीव महोत्पले या

सा मे श्रियं विशतु सागरसंमवायाः ॥ २ ॥

May the beautiful and continuous glances of the daughter of the ocean confer on me wealth. Her glances which are caused by her feeling of love and shyness repeatedly go towards and come back from the face



of the enemy of Mura even as the she-bee does towards the blue lily.

विरवामरेन्द्रपदविधिमदानवक्षम्

आनन्दहेतुरधिकं मुरविहिषोऽपि ।

ईषन्निषोदतु मयि क्षणमोक्षणार्थम्

इन्द्रीवरोवरसहोवरमिन्दिरायाः ॥ ३ ॥

May a fraction of the graceful glances of goddess Indira which resembles the interior of *nilot-pala* flower, stay a little on me for a while. Her glance confers great bliss even on the enemy of Mura and is capable of bestowing (on her devotee) the pompous position of Indra's sovereignty over all the gods.

आनीलिताक्षमधिगम्य मुदा मुकुन्दम्

आनन्दकन्दमनिषेधमनङ्गतन्त्रम् ।

आकेकरस्थितकनीनिकपक्ष्मन्त्रं

मूर्त्यै मवेन्मम भुजङ्गशयाङ्गनायाः ॥ ४ ॥

May the unwinking eyes of the consort of the Recliner on the serpent (Lord Vishnu) bring prosperity unto me, having happily reached Mukunda of half-closed eyes. Her eyes filled with the sentiment of love, and which are the source of Bliss become partly closed along with the pupils and eyelashes.

बाह्वङ्गुरे मधुजितः श्रितकौस्तुभे या  
हाराबलोव हरिनीलमयी विभ्राति ।

कामप्रदा भगवतोऽपि कटाक्षमाला

कल्याणमावहतु मे कमलालयायाः ॥ ५ ॥

May the continuous glances of the goddess seated on the lotus (Lakshmi) which falling on the Kaustubha-decked chest of the conqueror of Madhu appear to

be a garland of sapphires and which give pleasure even to the Lord, bring me welfare.

कालाम्बुवालिललितोरसि कंदभारेः

धाराधरे स्फुरति या तडिबङ्गनेव ।

मातुः समस्तजगतां महनीयमूर्तिः

भद्राणि मे विधातु भार्गवमन्दनायाः ॥ ६ ॥

May the adorable form of the daughter of Bhrigu and the mother of all the worlds who shines on the beautiful chest of the enemy of Kaitabha resembling dark clouds, like a lightning in the midst of the clouds, yield me all welfare.

प्राप्तं पदं प्रथमतः क्षतु यत्प्रभावात्

भाङ्गल्यभाजि मधुमायिनि मन्मथेन ।

मय्यापतेत्तद्विह मन्थरमोक्षणार्थं

मन्दालसं च मकरालयकन्यकायाः ॥ ७ ॥

May those graceful gentle side glances of the daughter of the ocean, by whose greatness Cupid gained the first hold on the destroyer of Madhu, fall upon me here.

दद्याद्दयानुपवनो ब्रविणाम्बुधाराम्

अस्मिन्नाकचनविहङ्गशिशौ विषण्णे ।

दुष्कर्मघर्ममपनीय चिराय दूरं

नारायणप्रणायिनीनयनाम्बुवाहः ॥ ८ ॥

Let the clouds, the eyes of the consort of Narayana together with the wind, the grace, remove completely the heat of bad deeds and shower the rains of riches over this grief-stricken, poor little bird (chataka).

इष्टा विशिष्टमतयोऽपि यया दयाद्र-

दृष्ट्या त्रिविष्टपपदं सुलभं लभन्ते ।

दृष्टिः प्रहृष्टकमलोवरदीप्तिरिष्टा

पुष्टिं कृष्टिं मम पुष्करविष्टरायाः ॥ ९ ॥

May those eyes of the goddess



seated on the lotus and possessing the radiance of the interior of the full-blown lotus, confer upon me the prosperity I wish. It is by Her compassionate looks that devotees and men of wisdom attain to the heaven easily.

गौर्वेतेति गरुडध्वजमुन्दरीति

शार्कभरीति शशिशेखरवल्लभेति ।

सृष्टित्पतिप्रलयकेलिषु संस्थितायै

तस्यै नमस्त्रिमवर्नेकगुरोस्तदर्थ्यै ॥ १० ॥

Salutations to the consort of the unique master of the three worlds (Lord Vishnu), who, as Sarasvati, the goddess of speech, as the beloved of the Lord Vishnu, as the goddess Durga Sakambhari and Parvati, the consort of Lord Siva, sports in creation, preservation and destruction of the universe.

भुक्त्यै नमोऽस्तु शुभकर्मफलप्रसूत्यै

रत्यै नमोऽस्तु रमणीयगणार्णवाय ।

शक्त्यै नमोऽस्तु शतपद्मनिकेतनायै

पुष्ट्यै नमोऽस्तु पुष्पोत्तमवल्लभायै ॥ ११ ॥

Salutations to the goddess in the form of the scriptures which yield the fruits of good acts. Salutations to Rati, the ocean of all good qualities. Salutations to Shakti, seated on the lotus. Salutations to Pushti, the consort of Purushottama.

नमोऽस्तु नालीकनिमाननायै

नमोऽस्तु दुग्धोदधिजन्मभूम्यै ।

नमोऽस्तु सोमामृतसोदरायै

नमोऽस्तु नारायणवल्लभायै ॥ १२ ॥

Salutations to the lotus-faced. Salutations to the one born of

the milky ocean. Salutations to the one who was born along with the moon and nectar. Salutations to the consort of Narayana.

संपत्कराणि सकलेन्द्रियनन्दनानि

साम्राज्यवानविभवानि सरोद्धासि ।

स्वद्वन्द्वनानि दुरितोद्धरणोद्यतानि

मा मेव मातरनिशं कलयन्तु मान्ये ॥ १३ ॥

Oh lotus-eyed venerable mother! let the salutations to you, which yield riches, please all the sense-organs, confer dominions and are engaged in removing misery, always characterise me. Let me be saluting you ever in the same manner.





यत्कटाक्षसमुपासनाविधिः

सेवकस्य सकलार्थसंपदः ।

संतनोति वचनाङ्गमानसैः

त्वां मुरारिहृदयेश्वरीं भजे ॥ १४ ॥

I worship you the mistress of the heart of the enemy of Mura with my words, body and mind, the meditation upon whose glances confers on the devotee all the desired prosperity.

सरसिजनिलये सरोजहस्ते

धवलतरंगमुकगन्धमाल्यशोभे ।

भगवति हरिवल्लभे मनोज्ञे

विभुवनमूर्तिकरि प्रसीद मह्यम् ॥ १५ ॥

Oh the one with lotus abode!  
the one with lotus in the hand!  
one who shines with white dress,  
sandal paste and flower garlands!  
Oh Adorable one! Consort of

Hari! The charming! The bes-tower of prosperity on the three worlds! Be benevolent to me.

दिग्घस्तिभिः कनककुम्भमुखावसुष्ट-

स्वर्वाहिनीविमलचारुणालाम्बुताङ्गीम् ।

प्रातर्नमामि जगतां जननीमशेष-

लोकाधिनाथगृहिणीममृताग्निपुत्रीम् ॥ १६ ॥

I salute in the early morning the universal mother, the consort of the Lord of the entire universe and the daughter of the milky ocean, who has her body bathed by the pure and pleasing waters of the celestial Ganges poured down from golden pitchers by the elephants of the directions (*diggajas*).

कमले कमलाक्षवल्लभे त्वं

कुरुणापूरतरङ्गितैरापङ्गैः ।

अवलोक्य मामकिञ्चनानां

प्रथमं पात्रमङ्कुरिमं दयायाः ॥ १७ ॥

Oh Kamala! Consort of the lotus-eyed Lord (Vishnu)! through glances lashed by waves of compassion, look at me, the first among the poor and a be-fitting recipient of your grace.

स्तुयन्ति ये स्तुतिभिरमूर्धिरत्नहं

त्रयीमयीं विभुवनमातरं रमाम् ।

गणाधिका गह्वरभाग्यसाजिनः

भवन्ति ते भुवि बुधभावितारायाः ॥ १८ ॥

Those who praise with these adorations Ramaa, the embodiment of the three Vedas and the mother of the three worlds, become enriched with good qualities and most fortunate, given to good thoughts acclaimed by the learned in this world. □ □ □

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CONFUCIUS

You have heard of the six becloudings?

There is the love of being benevolent without the love of learning, the beclouding here leads to foolish simplicity.

The love of knowing without the love of learning, whereof the beclouding brings dissipation of mind.

Of being sincere without the love of learning, here the beclouding causes disregarding of consequences.

Of straightforwardness without the love of learning, whereof the beclouding brings insubordination.

The love of firmness without the love of learning, whereof the beclouding results in extravagant conduct.



*To be practical is a matter of degree and relevance.*

*To be practical in terms of Shylock is to hoard; to be practical in terms of Senator Claghorn is to be elected; to be practical in terms of Attila the Hun is to plunder; to be practical in terms of St. Francis of Assisi is to love.*

—The Tao of Science



A FIVE-HUNDREDTH  
BIRTHDAY  
TRIBUTE  
TO  
**SANT SURDAS**

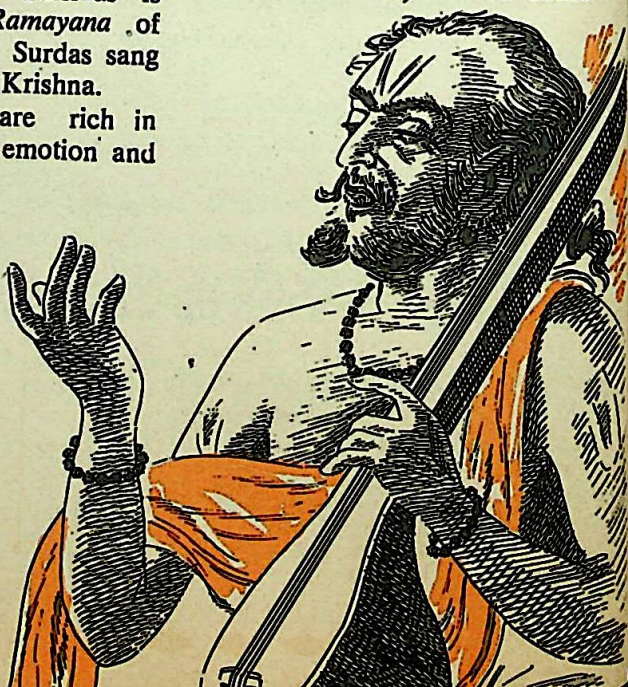
T. KRISHNAJI

**G**REAT among the Saint-Poets of India, are Sant Kabir, Sant Sur and Sant Tulsidas, who continue to inspire devotion to God and inculcate holy living. They enriched devotional literature in Hindi. Kabirdas excels all as a didactic preacher. Tulsidas is reputed for his *Ramayana* of epic grandeur and Surdas sang fine lyrics on Lord Krishna.

Surdas's lyrics are rich in imagery, depth of emotion and sweetness of expression and they appeal to our hearts intimately. His theme is *Bhagavata*, and he presents pen pictures of the *lilas* and glory of Krishna and His devotees rapturously.

Blind to the world of senses

and passions, Surdas had the unique gift of an inner perception. He perceives the play of the Lord Krishna, *Lila-Purushottama* and weaves them into lovely lyrics. One poet compares Sur to Sun and Tulsi to *Shashi* (Moon). But it would be better





to say that 'Sur is *Shashi* and 'Tulsi is Sur'.

The soft lyrics of Sur soothe us like the cool beams of the Moon, permeated with the glory of Lord Krishna of the Lunar race, while the chopal and the epic grandeur of Tulsi Ramayana is aglow with the austere Rama, *Maryada Purushottama*, of the Solar race.

Surdas was born blind. Some have identified him with Bilva Mangal, whose blind love ended in self torture and drove him into the woods in quest of the Divine Flute-player.

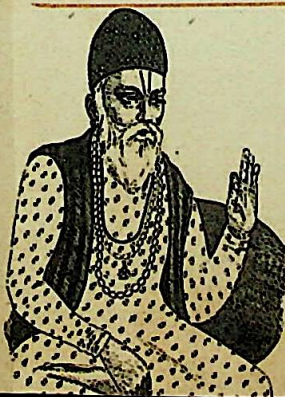
The early life of Surdas is obscure. He was born in a family of Surdhwaj Brahmins in about 1479 A.D. He suffered from congenital blindness and poverty. He was named Madan Mohan. When he was aged about 8 years, he was taken by his parents to Brindavan. Charmed by the Brajbhumi, the theatre of the *lila* of Lord Krishna, he refused to return to his village with his parents. He was left alone.

His life as a blind minstrel of God began and he wandered in the lanes and woods of Brindavan singing his way. He was also gifted with the knowledge of astrology and he foretold future and obtained alms.

In one of his wanderings in a neighbouring forest, he fell into an open well. He sang his helplessness and devotion and on the sixth day Lord Krishna in the guise of a boy extended his helping hand and rescued him from the well. Surdas knew that the lad was none but the Flute Charmer of Brindavan. He held him in his grip and sang his devotion, and anguish.

He sang: "Lord, You were quick in helping Draupadi and other devotees. Why did You delay now?" The Lord extricated himself from the grip of Surdas and Surdas reproachfully said, "Lord: You escape from me as I am disabled. If you will leave mine heart, I shall declare You bold."

Intense devotion and strong faith in Lord Krishna took him



Mystics while sharing the common unitive experience have their own individual ways of expression. Kabir (left) was known for his didactic teaching and Tulsi for his poetic genius.





to the heights of *Para Bhakti*. He remained often absorbed in the Divinity. He left Brindavan and stayed at Gaughat, a village on the way to Mathura from Adel.

Sri Vallabhacharya, a great religious teacher, philosopher and devotee of Lord Krishna was on his way from Adel to Mathura. He met Surdas at Gaughat and was thrilled to hear him sing. The Acharya gave him initiation and read to him *Bhagavata*. He told him to sing the scenes of the *lilas* of God as described in the *Bhagavata*. Divine vision inspired him to sing exquisite lyrics describing the *lilas* of God Krishna.

He sang many but only about 6000 lyrics have been preserved for posterity. It is known as *Sur Sagar Bhagavat*. Beauty of form, melody in expression, fine imagery and intense emotion flow into his lyrics. Each lyric thrills one who hears and while the ear hears, the mind sees the Divine play as if enacted before him. His lyrics are a sweet blend of *bhava* and *rasa*.

One of the *lilas* of Lord Krishna's boyhood was the complaint by the milkmaids to Mother Yasoda that her boy stole and ate their butter. Another charge was that he ate mud. *Bhagavata* describes the boy Krishna denying the allega-

tions. Krishna says, "Naaham bhakshitavaan, Amba, sarve mithyaabhisshamsinah," "I have not eaten Mother, they all speak false." Surdas renders it in an exquisite lyric. Its first line is, "Mayya mori mai nahi makhan khayao." "Mother mine, I have not eaten butter."

Surdas creates a true picture of Yasoda reacting to the allegations by the milkmaids against her boy. She was angry. Krishna addresses her "Mayya mori," (Mother mine), and all her anger freezes. He denies having eaten butter. Yasoda feels her darling speaks the whole truth. Surdas, a master of picturesque expression, with intense love for God is a superb artist of word and sound.

To him God is personal, endearing and ever present. Tulsi-das, a vedantin, devotee and scholar tried to compromise the 'saguna' and 'nirguna' aspects of God by exalting God's Name. Surdas, a pure Devotee, was unconcerned with the philosophical aspects. When someone spoke to him of God as Nirguna, he asked him: "Nirguna kaun desa ko vasi?" In which region does Nirguna abide?

His reputation as a saint-poet spread. Tulsi-das and many saints met him. Mughal King Akbar paid his respects to him.



Vitthalnathji, called Gosainji, son of Sri Vallabhacharya was a great patron of Saint-Poets. The eight great Saint Poets in Hindi literature—Surdas, Nandadas, Kumbhandas, Par, Anandadas Krishnadas, Chita Swami, Govindaswami and Chathurbhujdas—were under his patronage. Surdas was the chief among them and he lived with Vitthalnathji at Jatipura in the environs of Giriraj or Govardhan Mount.

Surdas would sing to the Deity at the time of Rajbhog. One day Vitthalnathji missed him at the time of Rajbhog and he was perturbed. With his adherents he ran in search of him. Surdas, aged eighty years, slowly wended his way near Chandra Sarovar. Vitthalnathji asked him what he was beholding. Surdas sang his last words rapturously: "*Swanjan Naina Rupa Rasa pate ab udi jate.*" Beholding Rupa and Rasa, now I fly.

His spirit flew to Goloka. His lyrics are sung as a part of the ritual in all the shrines of Vallabha Sampradaya at the time of Seva or Service to God. Great as a mystic poet of India, his memory is green and his poems are an inspiration, delight and solace.

A picture of Kabirdas with his didactic teaching, words of sen-

tentious wisdom, fills us with awe. Tulsidas impresses us as a great scholar-poet reciting *Ramayana*, whispering devotion and reverence, but Surdas with his *Lalita Padas* attracts and endears himself to us with deep love and intimacy and sings to us the glories of God and the *lilas* of Sri Krishna. He serves all with the ambrosial drink of Hari rasa, which stimulates devotion to God, Gopala Krishna.

Courtesy: "Mahatmas, Saints Sages and Seers of India and Abroad" by T. Krishnaji, 22, Samudra Mudaly Street, P.T. Madras-4.

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*Few people are familiar with the life of Swami Haridas, though the story of Tansen, his disciple, is well known all over India. Emperor Akbar had to come in disguise to enjoy the inspired music of Swami Haridas.*

*The author, a noted authority on music, narrates here what may be described as the story of the Tyagaraja of Hindustani music.*

# Swami Haridas

## the Tyagaraja of Hindustani Music

SMT. SUSHEELA MISRA



**WHILE** writing about the traditions and history of Hindustani classical music, the general tendency has been to give the entire credit for the growth of classical music to the Mughal Courts which, no doubt, encouraged the arts of music and dance with their lavish patronage and appreciation.

This is really only a partial view. The temples of the North, especially the sacred *Brajbhoomi*, was the very heart of our country, where, from time to time flourished an amazingly

large number of saints, poets, musicians, devotees, and *vagyeyakars*. The Vaishnava cult which

throve here has been inextricably interwoven with the rich flowering of our classical music traditions. The dominating theme of Hindu paintings, poetry, literature, music, and dance has been the Radhakrishna theme of the Vaishnava cult. Especially our music and dance have drawn inspiration and nourishment from the Bhakti of these Krishna devotees. Every particle of dust in *Braj* was made



sacred by the *leelas* of Lord Krishna, and that place echoed with the impassioned devotional music of great saint-singers.

Among these, it is Swami Haridas's name that comes uppermost in our minds. Brindaban was the vital centre of Vaishnava cult and the highest classical music traditions, and the place was for ever thronging with a large number of great saints, musicians, composers, poets, and Bhaktas.

The Keertanas of those times were actually Dhrupads set in classical *ragas and talas*, and many of them are sung even today. The Dhrupad style and Brajbhasha dominated Hindustani music in those times, and Swami Haridas was a master of both, a true *vagyeyakar* who composed a large number of Dhrupads in Brajbhasha. To Swami Haridas, Hindustani music owes a large debt; few gurus bequeathed such a brilliant galaxy of pupils.

Most people today know Swami Haridas merely as the revered Guru of Sangeet Samrat Tansen, but few are aware of his lasting contributions to the world of music, and *fewer still will believe that he was a greater musician than Tansen himself*. Tansen achieved more worldly fame and acclaim because he adorned the magnificent Darbar of Emperor Akbar, and hence his fame

spread far and wide in the world and wave of men.

But Swami Haridas, like Saint Tyagaraja, was an ascetic who turned away from worldly pleasures and rewards, because both of these saint-musicians found bliss in the path of Bhakti through the medium of music. In the sphere of Hindustani music, Swami Haridas occupies the same place as Saint Tyagaraja in Karnatic music although their favourite deities (*Ishta Devatas*) were different. Whereas Swami Haridas was an ardent devotee of Lord Krishna (Bihariji), Tyagaraja Swami was a Rama bhakta of the highest order. *Naadopaasana* was the medium of the *bhaktimarga*.

There are different versions about Haridas's early boyhood. Some say that his grandfather Gadaadhar (a Saraswat Brahmin) and grandmother (Chitra-devi?) originally lived in Uchchagram near Multan in the Punjab. Unable to bear the aggression of the "Yavanas" (Greek overlords), they set out of Multan accompanied by a large number of religious-minded Hindus.

Travelling slowly in a caravan of bullock-carts, they finally settled down in village Khera near Aligarh. Some people even claim that this village was renamed "*Haridaspur*" after the birth of Haridas. Others believe



that Haridas's Brahmin parents Asudhir and Gangadevi had further migrated to Rajpur village near Brindaban before the birth of their three sons. They were a very devout couple who revered saints and sadhus, and therefore, their children were born and brought up in this deeply religious environment. Haridas, the eldest son was born in 1537; the second son Jagannath in 1541, and the youngest Govindraj in 1545.

Right from his childhood, Haridas was a strangely thoughtful boy, deeply sensitive to the beauties of Nature, utterly indifferent to games, and a seeker of solitude. The small boy was often discovered seated alone beside some river, or in some lonely forest, lost in the contemplation of the beauty and glory of the divine pair Krishna-Radha enshrined in his heart.

With the hope of changing his ascetic temperament, the loving parents married him off at the age of 14 to a sweet young girl, Harimati. But even this virtuous girl could not alter his ways nor attract him to the life of an ordinary householder. A few years later, when Haridas decided to sever all family ties and go to Brindaban, his neglected wife plucked up courage for once to confront and ask him:

"My lord! Why is it that there are no mental or physical bonds

"Your Majesty! I have to sing in order to please my emperor who is a mere mortal, but my master sings only for the Emperor of Emperors. I am merely a pale moon that draws a bit of light from my Guru who is a veritable Sun in the firmament of music."

between you and me as in the case of other married couples? Have I said or done anything to offend you?"

Haridas smiled compassionately and consoled Harimati:—"Harimati! The union in this world is not a permanent one. We meet in this world, only to be parted sooner or later. It is wiser to love and adore Krishna, the Lord of the Universe."

In his early twenties Haridas left his home and wandered in many sacred pilgrimage-spots, but ultimately, it was in Brindaban with its natural serenity and beauty that he found the ideal place for his *Naadopaasana*, his chosen path of Bhakti. The little hut in Nidhuban Nikunj where this saint-musician spent the rest of his life, has become a hallowed spot for all successive generations of musicians and music-lovers.

His only worldly possessions



were a set of old clothes and an earthen pot. Every particle of the white dust of Brajbhoomi was held sacred by this bhakta. Contemplating on the pure waters of the Yamuna or on the star-studded canopy of the sky above, Swami Haridas seemed to be in constant communion with Lord Krishna. Lost in his musical trances, he was able to hear the heavenly melodies from the Bansuri of the divine Flute-player.

Haridas was not only a superb saint-singer but he was also endowed with many wonderful Yogic powers. There are several stories of how he cured the pride of Prakashananda, a Yogi from the Himalayas, the greed of another one called Dayaram, and how he removed the veil of *maya* (illusion) from the eyes of Raja Rajaram Badhel of Orjha, and so on.

Swami Haridas was the guru of a large number of *shishyas*, but the "Naad Vinod" specially mentions eight of them who achieved great fame and affluence. They were Baiju Gopal-lal, Madanrai, Ramadas, Diwakar Pandit, Somnath, Tanna Misra, and Sowrsen. Baiju from a village (Champaran) in Gujarat later on became a favourite court-musician of Raja Mansingh of Gwalior. Tanna Misra at first opted to become a court musician of Rewa, but was soon

elevated into "Sangeet Samrat Tansen," the brightest gem in the Darbar of Emperor Akbar. Madanrai and Ramdas migrated to Delhi; Somnath and Sowrsen settled in the Punjab. Gopal-lal achieved fame as a Gayak and as a Nayak in the Kashmir Darbar. These brilliant disciples of Swami Haridas composed numerous *Dhrupads*, *Dhamars*, *Taranas*, *Triwats*, *Ragmalas* and *Chaturang* as well as many new ragas, all of which have enriched Hindustani music considerably.

They continued the devotional music traditions of their saintly guru, although they also had to compose and sing songs in praise of their royal patrons. Swami Haridas never left his humble hut in Brindaban. Therefore, the great *rajas* and *maharajas* of the times and even the great *Emperor Akbar himself had to come to his secluded hut in order to obtain his darshan and hear his divinely inspired singing*. It is said that the Emperor disguised himself as the Tanpura-carrier of Miyan Tansen in order to get admission into the hut of the guru. Swamiji's music impressed him so deeply that on their way back, Akbar asked Tansen: "How is it that *even you cannot sing as wonderfully as your great master?*"

*"Your Majesty! I have to sing in order to please my emperor who is a mere mortal; but my*



*master sings only for the Emperor of Emperors. I am merely a pale moon that draws a bit of light from my guru who is a veritable Sun in the firmament of music."*

Swami Haridas was lucky to be born at a time when the whole country was enjoying peace and prosperity under the benign rule of Akbar. Brindaban was surcharged with the vibrations of the Bhakti cult, and a large number of saint-musicians converged into the sacred Brajbhoomi such as Swami Vallabhacharya, Srinathji, Gosai Vithaldas, Chaitanya Mahaprabhu, Raghunathadas, Goswami Hithaharivamsaji, Sri Jaidev, Gokulnath and the *ashtachchaap* poets. The two main *sampradaayas* or traditional styles of devotional music were the *Nimbarki*, and the *Radha-Vallabhpanthi* styles. Poet Jaidev belonged to the former. Among his successors was Asudheer Devji, the father of Swami Haridas.

The followers of both the styles enriched the classical Keertan traditions. Swamiji was such a passionate Bhakta of Radha-Krishna that he was regarded as an incarnation of Lalita-Sakhi. He followed the *Sakhi Bhava* cult in which Lord Krishna is regarded as the Lord

of the universe, and all his devotees are his Sakhis. Swami Haridas and his brilliant disciples have enriched Hindustani music for ever.

From the age of 25 till his death, Swami Haridas lived in Nidhuban Nikunj which has become a sacred spot for all subsequent generations of musicians. Haridas Sammelans are held annually in many places. Most eloquent are the annual festivals in Brindaban where a large number of reputed musicians gather and pay their homage to this great composer and saintly musician through their musical outpourings. □ □ □

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# WISDOM THROUGH Humour

**RARE** indeed is the privilege that one possesses in serving a man whose life is the demonstration of what he says. I was fortunate to have such a privilege in serving Swami Atulananda of the Ramakrishna Order.

Swami Atulananda, popularly known as Gurudas Maharaj, was well-known for his spiritual attainments.

Swami Atulananda, familiarly known as Gurudas Maharaj was, in a sense, the first European monk of the Ramakrishna Order.

Cornelius J. Heijblom, as the Swami was called in his premonastic life, was born in 1870 as the son of a prosperous merchant in Amsterdam. After graduation from an agricultural college he migrated to the United States before the turn of the century. In 1898 he came in contact with the Vedanta movement inaugurated by Swami Vivekananda, whom he met in 1899 and 1900. He lived intimately with several direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna who worked in the west, especially Swami Turiyananda (Hari Maharaj).

The first part of this feature is a personal account of Swami Atulananda by Swami Shashankananda who had the privilege of serving him.

In the second part, we reproduce



excerpts from book *Atman Alone Abides*, a compilation of observations of Swami Atulananda recorded by Swami Dhireshananda and edited by Swami Vidyatmananda. (Published by Sri Ramakrishna Math, 11, Ramakrishna Math Road, Madras, Price Rs. 10/-).



He was a Hollander, who migrated to New York after his graduation and there he met Swami Vivekananda in 1899 and 1900. He came to live in India in 1906 and returned in 1908. Again he lived in India from 1911 to 1916 and finally he came to India for ever in 1922. He passed away in August 1966. He was initiated by Holy Mother Sri Sarada Devi and came in close contact with many direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa.

It was the year 1966. Swami Atulanandaji was staying in Kankhal when I joined him as his attendant.

The 96-year-old Swami was lying on his bed, struggling for his normal breath. His condition was serious that day. The two attendants including the writer, were worried about his ailment and that too with the advancing summer. His sickness did not allow him to be taken to Barlowganj (a hill station below Mussouri) where he used to live in summer.

I was thinking about the sufferings of the Swami—the broken spine, severe cough, bleeding and painful ulcer which had already consumed his one eye and half nose, irritating bedsores and above all the breathing trouble. Even in such a condition he told the visiting doctor, "I am all right." But I could well imagine the sufferings of this great soul who was trying to endure them with stoic calmness.

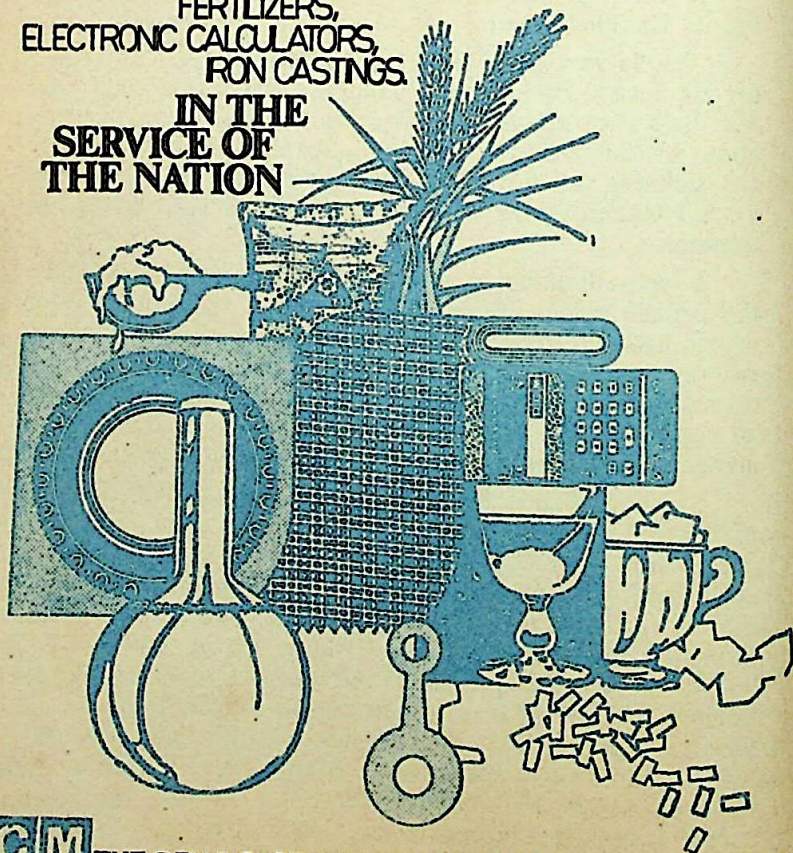
Suddenly I thought of praying to God, the All-Merciful, to be kind towards his dear child and cure him. But then the Swami looked at me and made a sign, asking me to go near him. He said, "Don't! Don't pray for this" (pointing to his body). I was surprised to see him read my thought. But he continued, "Never, never ask for this body. Nobody can escape suffering. Even Sri Ramakrishna had to suffer so much due to cancer in his throat. What a pain he had, but did he ask the Divine Mother for its cure? He could not. Man plans, but only that happens which He plans. Everything happens according to the God's Plan. Understand that and be at peace."

I was silently hearing these inspiring words when he looked at me very affectionately and took my hand in his hand and said, "Hari Maharaj (Swami Turiyananda, one of the direct disciples of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa)



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often used to repeat the following verse:—

*God's plan like lilies unfold,  
We must not tear the leaves apart,  
Time alone will reveal  
The galaxy of gold.*

The Swami, then, closed his eyes. His face was shining with joy. Perhaps he was enjoying the bliss of the resignation to the Will of God. Resignation to the Will of God is not an easy thing.

It is easy to say, "It is the Will of God," when everything goes well, but the man who says so even in the greatest misery really means what he says.

Sri Ramakrishna says, "One doesn't come to grief if one lets a good man assume one's responsibilities." All sufferings and worries come to him only who thinks that he is the doer and not God. We may say that any interference in the Plan of God brings all suffering and pain."

The Swami was still smiling with a child-like simplicity when I silently returned to my seat and felt myself free from all worries.

## II

Illumination comes suddenly, quickly. How and when, it cannot be said. When I learned bicycling, at first I couldn't maintain my balance. The teacher told me, "Don't look at the wheel; look straight ahead." Then suddenly it was all right. So you see, a teacher is needed. The knack comes suddenly.



Boys are sometimes very witty. One time in a certain school the boys were doing problems in arithmetic. The superintendent was there. The boys did the lesson well. The superintendent, in order to test the boys' common sense, asked them, "Now, you see, today is Monday; then how old am I?" All the boys were puzzled as to how to respond. What kind of a problem was that? Nobody could answer. At last, one little fellow in the back raised his hand, stood, up, and said, "Well Sir, you must be fifty." "On what basis did you decide that?" asked the superin-



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tendent. "Because sir, my brother is half-mad, and he is 25."



Wordly people sometimes manage work better than monks do. At home they have to adjust to their life-partner day and night, and hence they have more endurance than Sadhus. It is not a joke to adjust always with another person, day in and day out. This gives people good training; thus householders often exhibit more capacity for endurance in running public institutions than we Sadhus do.



Real religion is only meant for individuals and not for the mass. The masses take religion as bathing and performing ceremonies, that's all. That also has value and, in a way, can be called religion. But real religion is knowing the Self, realizing the truth: "I am the Atman." Who wants that? Very few indeed.



People want freedom to work as they like, and a little appreciation. Then they work better. See S. How nicely he is working here, tending plants, growing flowers, removing stones, and looking after me. One person takes five minutes to do something. Another takes fifteen minutes to do the same. One does a thing calmly; another does it noisily. Now if the former goes on finding fault with the other "Oh, he takes so much time and makes as much noise as if a factory is working," then there won't be any harmony. Give a man as much freedom as possible to do his work in his own way. Then he will do it better.



We live in the midst of miracles. Look at a flower or a butterfly. How wonderful it is; the colour, shape, everything—and how it grows and matures! The human brain is still more wonderful.



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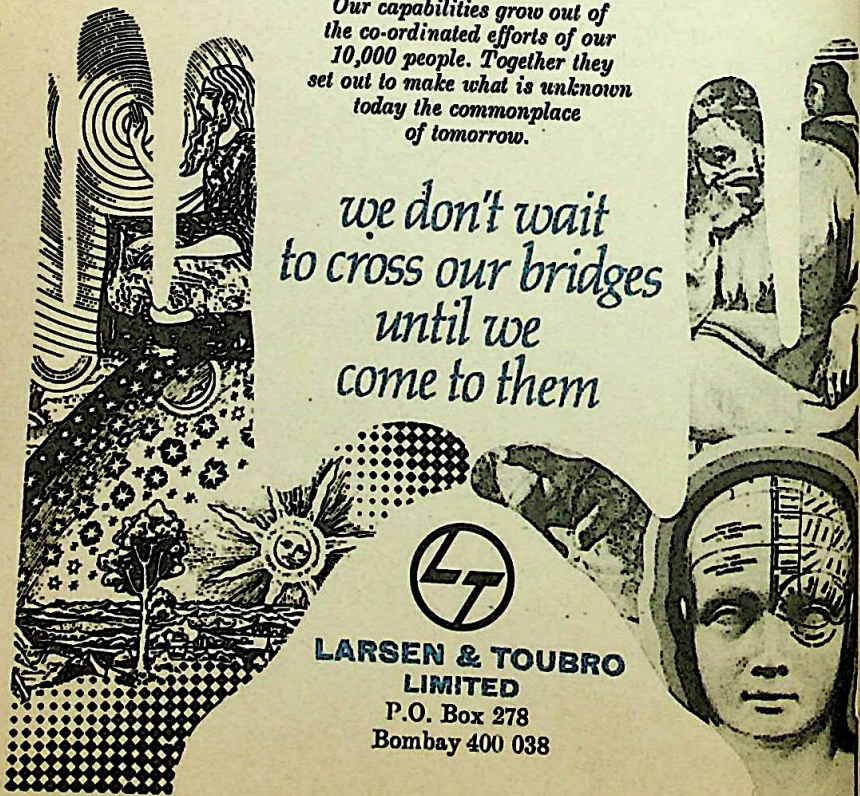
*Our capabilities grow out of  
the co-ordinated efforts of our  
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set out to make what is unknown  
today the commonplace  
of tomorrow.*

*we don't wait  
to cross our bridges  
until we  
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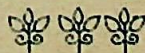
Once a man came to Mayavati on a visit. Mrs. Sevier asked him if he was married. He replied, "I am in the family way." In English that expression means that one is pregnant. The man didn't know. He should have replied, "Yes, I am married" or "Yes, I am a family man." Mrs. Sevier used to recount that incident with much amusement.



Some people shout constantly: mothers calling out to children in loud voice, even though they are nearby; people, though close together, crying at the top of their voices. I think this habit is a result of the joint family system. With many people in the family living together, raised voices are necessary. But I have found that when you shout, even the servants shout back. The more you shout, the less they obey.

Previously there was a wine shop in front of our gate here. Swami K. had asked the government authorities to have it removed. As a result, there were inspections by Indian officers, and there would be much shouting; but this produced no result. At last an English official came. There was no loud argument at all. He was convinced that a wine shop was a nuisance in front of a hospital. It was removed in no time. I think it is the conviction behind the words that works; volume has no effect!

Swami Turiyananda and I went to Kurukshetra during a solar eclipse. A huge crowd had gathered there. No space was to be had in any shelter. We went to sleep under a tree, but it began to rain. We tried to push our way into a hut crammed with pilgrims. There was a great hullabaloo. I thought we were going to be thrown outside bodily. But we persisted, and we were given a little space. One pilgrim even offered us a smoke. Swami Turiyananda explained: "You don't know our people. They shout, but they do not mean anything by it."



Meditation is best done when it is possible to snatch time from work for this purpose. When one has no work,



For  
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and the whole day is at one's disposal, then that enthusiasm for practising meditation fades away. When I was working in the office and had only a little leisure morning and evening, I meditated well. So it is better to have work to do. In old age, one cannot, even if one wishes to, do any serious Sadhana. Whatever has to be done, it has got to be done in youth. In old age, one only lives with the memory of the past, of what he has achieved. Hari Maharaj used to impress on me in America, "Be up and doing; this is your youth. This is the moment. Don't waste time." He was quite oblivious of his surroundings. In the streets he used to talk to me in that vein in a loud voice, and people used to stare at us. But who cared? Oh, the enthusiasm of those days!



Religion is for the few: for the rest it is all talk. In Christian monasteries there are many rules and disciplines. In my early days, I used to think such things very desirable, but now I am afraid of such machine-like, rigid life. What is the use of such lifelong austerities? One should try rather to forget the body than to punish it.

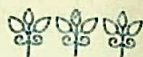


In the West they do not like that others should come and handle books and papers on their desk without permission. There is a good side to this. Suppose I have kept two sets of letters separately, one set answered and the other unanswered. Now S.—comes to clean the table, and makes the two sets one. It increases my work. I have to go through those letters again and separate them. Although he does it with all good intentions, still it is troublesome. Or say a new book is lying on the table. In the West, if one wants to see it, one will say, "Oh! you have a new book, it seems." Then I may offer to show it if I wish.

Here things are quite different. Squatting with others and taking food on the floor is impossible for some Westerners. Nivedita would overdo everything. It was too much. She forced her English guests to sit on the



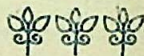
floor to dine. One of them was a fat lady. Oh! how terrible it was for her. Once at Rishikesh I went with Swami N.—to a private house for food. No squatting there to take food. There we had to eat kneeling. How terrible it was! I won't forget it all my life.



Usually in the West they say that children grow up together in the same house, and so they get used to noise. At Sargachhi I found thirty boys reading in a circle. One lamp in the centre for all. All of them were shouting at the top of their voices. Suppose one is reading loudly, "There are clouds in the sky," and the next boy is doing some problems in arithmetic—how disturbing it is. But they get used to it. In the West, in the study halls there will be no noise, no talking aloud when the students are studying. It is interesting to find these different ways in different lands.



Once someone visited a lunatic asylum. He was taken round by a guide who was himself an inmate. While taking leave of the visitor, after having shown him the different departments, the guide remarked to the visitor: "You see the whole world is mad except you and me. And about you, too, I am not so sure."



In my early days in India I was amazed to note the Indian custom of tearing up letters, after going through them, in piece and throwing the bits inside or outside wherever one liked.

Once in Belur Math two American ladies noticed such pieces of paper scattered here and there. One of them collected the pieces, heaped them together, and set fire to the heap.

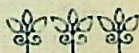
When somebody asked what she was doing, she replied, "Well, here the East and the West will meet!"



In Holland, England and America there are no water buffaloes. People do not drink buffalo milk. Some say it has a bad smell. I remember in my boyhood days, once we went to the zoo. There I saw a female water buffalo. Seeing the big udder, I asked whether the animal gave milk. My nurse scolded me, saying "You naughty boy! To think of wanting milk from that dirty creature."



M. has written to me, asking for my blessings on the eve of his sannyas ceremony. Blessings, blessings—people ask for blessings. Now just imagine. If everything goes off well, they will say, "O, Maharaj, it is due to your blessing." But if something goes wrong, then the same person would say, Damn your blessings." You remember Sri Ramakrishna's story of the barber who heard someone use the word "damn." Knowing no English, he said, "If 'damn' means something good, then I am 'damn' my father is 'damn' and my forefathers are 'damn.' But if 'damn' means something bad, then you are 'damn,' your father is 'damn' and so are your forefathers." Such is the world.



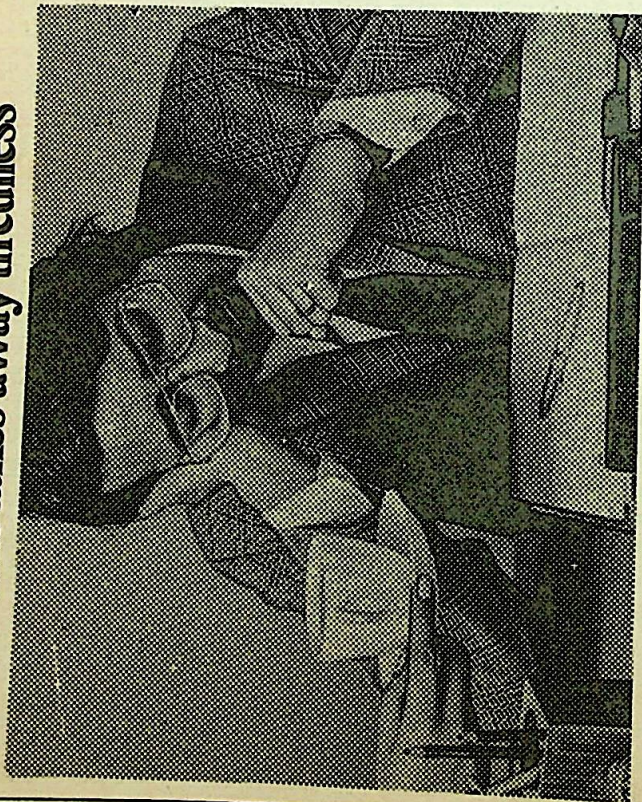
Often desire for something makes a man feel unhappy. I remember when I was young, once a friend and I went somewhere on a trip by bicycle. At noon we took lunch at a small wayside hotel. Each ate the same lunch. I was satisfied. Not my friend. He was a smoker. After food he must smoke. So I told him: "You see, we two had the same meal, and I am satisfied. But you are not satisfied unless you smoke. So the thought of smoking goes on in your mind and makes you feel unhappy." Hence I say that desire makes a man unhappy.



Anger, jealousy, hatred, and such emotions are there in all beings. Once Socrates was teaching a class. The pupils were there round him—all in a reverential attitude. Suddenly a palmist entered the room and wanted to read

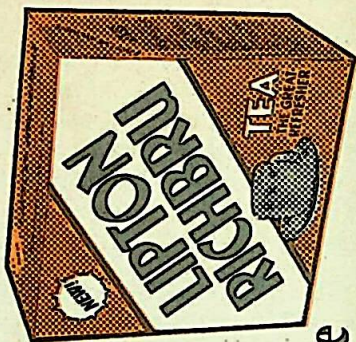


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the palm of Socrates. Socrates showed him his left palm. The man began to read the lines and went on saying, "You are greedy, you are jealous" and so on. The pupils got angry and wanted to push the man out. Then Socrates said, "Wait, my boys. On my left palm, of course, these things are there. But see my right palm and you will find that such tendencies are gone. They have been conquered." Socrates conquered them. Swami Turiyananda used to relate this story to illustrate the teaching that such vices as anger, jealousy, hatred, and so on could be conquered.

I do not give blessings to anybody. In the West, we think that only God can bless; and his saints can bless. We say, "God bless you." But here blessing is used in the sense of well-wishing. My Samskaras (tendencies inherited from previous births) forbid me to bless. But I wish all well. When people say, "Bless me, bless me," I say, "Yes, yes" and simply wish them well.



I can't always understand people because of my partial deafness. It is a difficult thing. And practically throughout my life I have been, so to speak, half deaf for another reason—I don't understand the language (Bengali) you talk. So I don't bother about what people are talking about, unless I become curious. I don't mind what people say, unless I am attacked. Once Swami Turiyananda asked a lady who was hard-of-hearing how she felt about her handicap. She replied, "Well, Swami, I hear what I want to hear, and I escape having to listen to gossip."



In New York, when I was working in the office, and at Shanti Ashrama, I had the finest spiritual experience of my life. I have found that meditation goes best along with work. Executives carry their responsibilities home with them, as it were, thinking about their work even after work. Fortunately, I had no such elevated position. After doing my allotted office duty, I had no further worries that day, and I meditated intensely. On those occasions when I



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was unemployed and had lots of time at my disposal, then meditation became a common thing and it was not intense.



Once an abbot was approached by a monk who had something to tell him. The abbot said, "Wait in your cell. I will come to you. Now I am busy." The monk waited and waited, but the abbot did not come; he simply forgot. When the other brothers told the abbot about the monk, he called the monk and said, "Brother, you may be a good monk, but not a great monk; for it ought to have occurred to you that I had forgotten."



Two Sadhus were wading across a river. A helpless girl also was there. She dared not try to cross. So one Sadhu carried her over and then went on his way. The second Sadhu rebuked the first. "O you have touched a girl; being a Sadhu, that was not good."

The first Sadhu replied, "True, Brother, I did carry her across the river and there I put her down. But you are still carrying her in your mind."

You see, despite abstinence, desire—taste—remains. As the *Bhagavad Gita* says, "The objects of desire keep away from a man who does not contact them, but not the hankering for them. Even this hankering goes when the vision of the Supreme is obtained." So I come back to my old belief: "I am the Atman." In that, all problems get solved.

To get rid of sex thoughts, higher ideas must be cultivated. Sex urges can be controlled or subdued, but cannot be done away with. They can be eliminated only by realization of the Supreme. The idea "I am the Supreme" has to be made stronger and stronger. Stronger motives can displace weaker ones. Look at D. He was such a smoker; nothing in the world could make him stop. Then came the fear of getting cancer and he gave up smoking once and for all.



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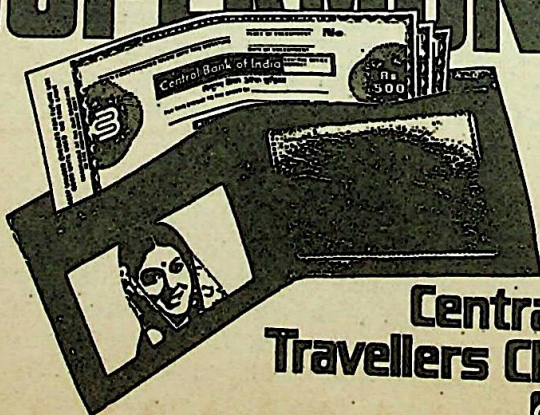
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Some people experience a sense of dejection periodically. The mind's nature works like that. The only remedy is patient endurance. Once in New York I was feeling very bad—no pleasure in meditation or in anything. I contacted Swami Abhedananda. He told me. "Don't worry. The mind acts in a spiral way. Even the downward course presupposes an upward motion. Never mind." Until we know that we are divine, there is no way out of these struggles. Swamiji used to say, "A particle of Truth can burn a mountain of ignorance."

Once at Baranagore monastery Hari Maharaj felt very sad. At night he was pacing alone on the roof of the house, when suddenly he saw the moon appear through the clouds. Instantly the thought came to his mind, "The moon was constantly shining there; it was only covered by the clouds. Likewise, the Atman is ever-shining, it is only veiled by ignorance." And the dejection was gone.



Humour is the most philosophic of all the emotions. It is a recognition in our instinctive nature of what our minds in their purest contemplation can inform us, that pleasure and pain are, except for the incidental purpose of preserving us, indifferent—that failure is just as interesting as success.

—Max Eastman, "The Sense of Humour"





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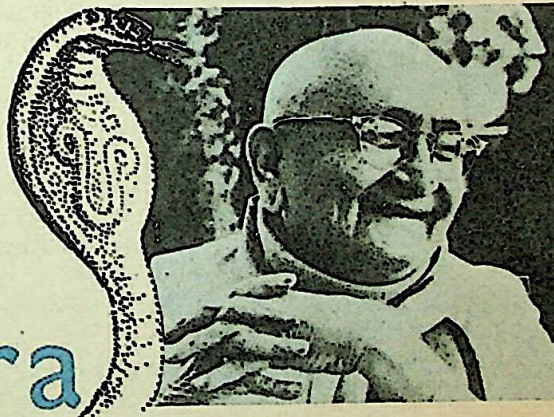


*Shri Vittal Rao's innate bhakti was nurtured by his father, who gave him the mantra, "Sri Ram Jai Ram Jai Jai Ram." Unceasing remembrance of the divinity flung Vittal Rao into the ocean of inexplicable joy, wherefrom he emerged as Swami Ramdas. Following Ram's command, he travelled all over India in the garb of a samnyasin with Ram's name on his lips. His travelogues are amongst the greatest romances of hagiography.*

*Having lost his "I", Swami Ramdas always referred to himself and his activities in the third person. His books In Quest of God, Gita Sandesh, Ramdas Speaks and In the Vision of God have been published by the Bhavan.*

# GOD CAME AS A Cobra

SWAMI RAMDAS



**A**BOUT five o'clock in the evening Ramdas reached Pathankot. He saw a white tower of a temple on the road-side into which he entered.

The moment the Pujari of the temple saw him, he showed great delight, as though he had been long looking for Ramdas's coming. He embraced Ramdas with great love and made him sit beside him on a cot. He offered Ramdas a sweet drink and talked to him in a most friendly manner. The night was drawing near.

"Maharaj, Ramdas desires to spend this night in a perfectly solitary room in your mandir. Kindly provide him with such a place," Ramdas pleaded.



The Pujari at once said that there was a cave-like room underground, at the base of the main temple structure, a place free from the disturbing noises of external life. It had not been in use for a long time. Still it was fit for habitation. Ramdas agreed to occupy it for the night. Taking an old mat, the Pujari led him down a flight of stonesteps into the semi-dark room, about ten feet square, in the bowels of the earth. Dust lay heavy on the floor which was perhaps unswept for years. He spread the mat on which Ramdas sat and bade the pujari goodnight. The pujari left.

When night descended on the outside world, the room was merged in inky darkness. There was a single small window to the level of the outer ground.

For hours Ramdas sat on the mat in a state of complete oblivion of his body when he was brought down to the external consciousness by the sound of footsteps. He opened his eyes, and saw three persons enter the cave. They had a lantern with them and also a hand harmonium and a tabla. They were the pujari and his friends. The pujari had also brought with him a brass *lota* full of milk for Ramdas. At his pressure Ramdas drank the milk.

"Maharaj," the pujari then said, "we intend to sing a few songs here. Hence we have come with the musical instruments."

"All right," Ramdas replied, "Ramdas will only be too happy to listen to your music."

The light was placed in the centre of the room and the friends stationed themselves in a line to the left of Ramdas at the base of the staircase. The music began. The song was in Hindi composed by a well-known saint. They sang the first verse which meant: "He is a *jivan-mukta*, or a liberated soul who has discovered the joy of having *Ramnam* on his tongue."

When they finished the first verse, there was a sudden stoppage of their song. The musical instruments also ceased to function.

Ramdas turned to them to see what the matter was. All the three of them with mouths wide open and frightened eyes were looking in the direction beyond the light on the right side of Ramdas.



A venomous snake was seen slowly gliding towards Ramdas. At one bound they stood up as one man and exhorted Ramdas to do the same.

"Let us leave this place, Maharaj. I can find you accommodation elsewhere," said the pujari. "The snake is the worst of its kind. It is full of poison from tail to head. Do get up and follow us."

Ramdas was cool and quiet, and replied: Ram, why are you so afraid of the snake? God himself has given us *darshan* in that form. He has come with so much love to hear the music. He won't do any harm. Sit down and go with the Kirtan."

"Impossible," cried out the pujari, "to sing when the messenger of Yama himself is so close at hand! We are off. We advise you to come away with us."

"Don't give way to fear. The snake will do no harm. You need not sing, but don't run away. You will know that the snake means no ill," urged Ramdas.

They would not sit down. As the serpent crept nearer and nearer to Ramdas, they turned like the hand of a clock and drew round at the tail end of the serpent. He beckoned it and said, "Beloved Ram, come on. Don't hesitate."

He had a piece of jaggery tied to his cloth, which he untied and placed before the snake and said: "Beloved Ram, this is the only offering Ramdas can make you, please accept it."

The snake approached the lump of jaggery, and with its forked tongue licked it well for a few seconds and then came onwards. It was now only about two inches from him, but he was sitting rock-still. Somehow, it did not quite approach him, but turned its head outwards and took a circuitous path close behind him. As it emerged on the left, the friends moved round to the right of Ramdas. They took care to see that they always maintained a distance of at least a yard from the tail-end of the snake. The snake now slowly made for the flight of steps and started creeping up from one corner of it.

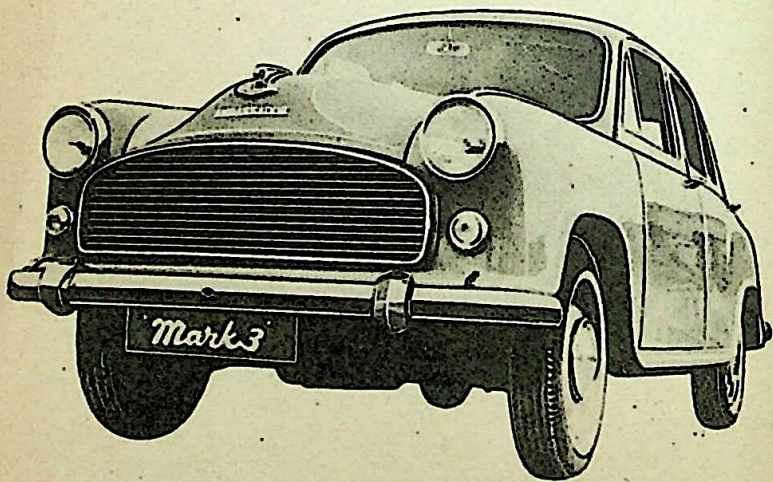
"Maharaj," cried out the pujari in a tone of anxiety, "there are about forty steps to ascend to reach the higher ground level. The snake goes so leisurely that it might



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take hours to gain the top. Till then we are caught up here. Also there is no knowing when it might take it into its head to turn back into the cave. We are done for."

"Have no fear. It is going up one corner of the steps. You may safely ascend by the other," Ramdas suggested, "Nothing of the kind," quickly put in the pujari, "we dare not do it. We have no trust in it as you have."

Ramdas then proposed to stand midway on the steps, so that they might securely pass up between him and the wall, opposite to the course followed by the snake. They agreed and he took the position indicated by him. One by one, the friends went up the steps, leaping four steps at a time! Before going, they warned him again of the danger, appealing to him to follow them out of the place. They took with them, besides the musical instruments, the lantern also.

Ramdas was again immersed in pitch darkness. He regained his seat on the mat. He groped in the darkness for the lump of jaggery tasted by the serpent, and after some search, got it. Being the *prasad* left by the serpent, he threw it into his mouth and ate it with great delight. He remained in the sitting posture the whole night, absorbed in a blissful trance.

When the first glow of the morning was filtering through the translucent panes of the small window of the cave, he found a head peering into the room from a landing step at a sharp corner of the stone staircase. It was the pujari peeping to make sure that Ramdas was alive! Ramdas looked at him and smiled. He then entered the cave room with his friends of the previous night close at his heels. They sat down before him and gazed at him in wonder. Then the pujari's attention was drawn to the spot where the lump of jaggery had been. Not finding it there he questioned Ramdas as to what had become of it. He replied that being the *prasad* of the snake, he had eaten it off.

"Good-God!" he exclaimed, "You are a terrible man." "Ramdas is not a terrible man," Ramdas returned, "He is only a child and servant of God."

Then Ramdas left the cave room and temple, and proceeded on his journey.





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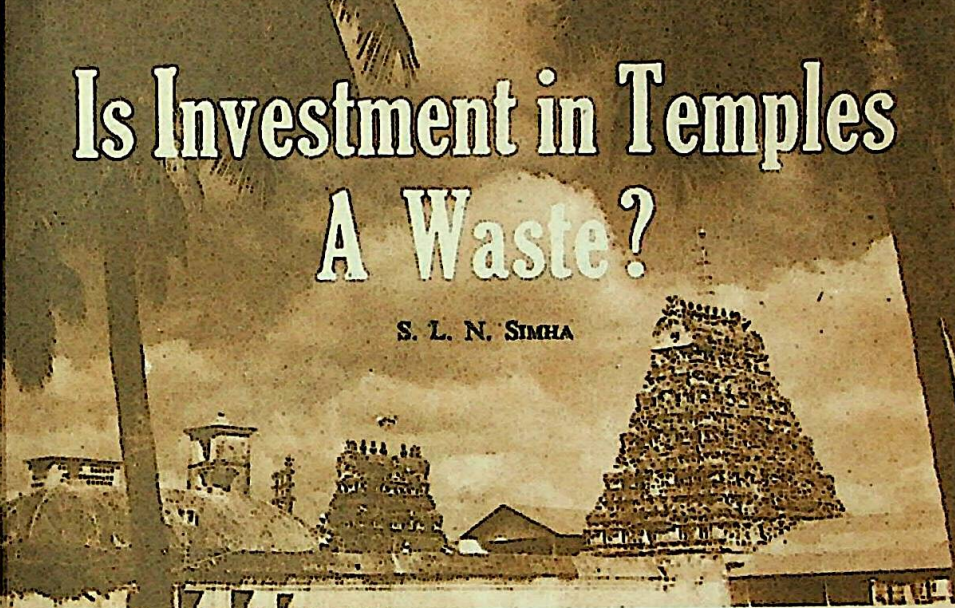
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# Is Investment in Temples A Waste?

S. L. N. SIMHA



**T**HERE is a tremendous interest in the revival of our culture. All over the country, in the South in particular, everyday there are dozens of discourses on our epics, Upanishads and the *Bhagavad Gita*. Apart from Indians, foreigners are also taking increasing interest in our philosophical and religious works and are trying to practise our way of living.

There is a marked interest in the construction of temples and other holy places and their renovation. Some years ago, when I undertook the responsibility for having *Gopurams* constructed for a temple in Mysore, the response I received from friends and wellwishers all over the country was beyond my expectations.

*I have given careful thought to the view of the younger generation (including my children) that it is far better to spend money on hospitals and schools rather than on temples, but I have no doubt that expenditure on temples is as beneficial to the community as that on hospitals and schools.*

I visit a few temples on every Saturday and I find it gives me tremendous peace of mind and brings me close to the Creator. During the hour or so I spend in temples, the atmosphere is such as to bring down my blood pressure rather than push it up like what happens during the rest of the day in this complex and unfriendly world. I see scores of people chatting in temple corridors, and either doing



meditation or reciting some prayers or engaged in religious and philosophical discussions rather than indulging in idle talk and gossiping which is what takes place generally when people gather in office rooms, clubs, parks and other such places.

Undoubtedly, conditions in Indian hospitals are deplorable. The basic amenities are not there, except in a few hospitals in the large cities. The masses of people do not receive medical attention. Therefore, clearly there is need for a very substantial stepping up of expenditure on hospitals and public health generally.

However, even in the best of conditions, hospitals do not provide a lasting answer to man's troubles, i.e., physical troubles. The remarkable advances in medicine and surgery, have no doubt helped the curing of many types of illness but then the modern world has produced new types of illness, more mental than physical in character. It is found that drugs do not constitute an answer to many of these types of mental illness. In fact, the drug habit makes things worse, calling for more drugs, the whole thing becoming a vicious circle, as it were.

While, of course, there is no question of giving up drugs altogether, it is being increasingly



S. L. N. SIMHA

Born in 1918 at Bangalore, Sri Seshadri. Iyengar Lakshmi Narai Simha worked as a Lecturer in Economics at the University of Mysore for a little over four years. He joined the Reserve Bank of India in 1945 and has held several positions in the Research Department of the Bank, including that of Director of Monetary Research. He has also served the International Monetary Fund, Washington. His book, *Ramayana for the Modern World*, has been published by the Bhavan. Presently he is the Director of the Institute for Financial Management and Research, Nungambakkam, Madras.

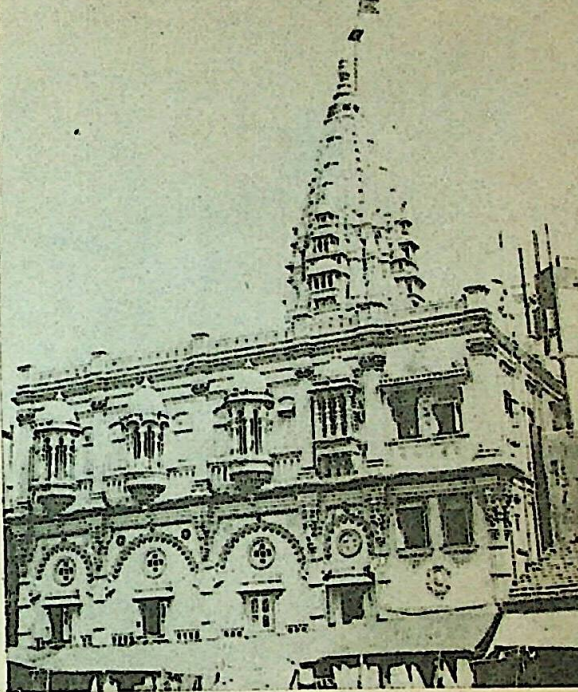
realised that drugging should be nominal and mental tensions, imbalances and illness cured in other ways. Love from family members can do much to restore mental peace and promote happiness. It is also found that reading philosophical and religious books can produce much benefit. In this curative process, visits to the temples have an important place.



Every person has his own favourite Deity or group of Deities, whom he would like to worship regularly, visiting the shrines as frequently as possible. In this connection, it must be mentioned that visits to the temples must be done in a fairly leisurely manner. Lots of people rush in and rush out of the temples, more as a token rather than in a manner that will produce real benefit from such visits. It would, in particular, be beneficial to sit in the corridors and yards of temples and try to establish a close communion with the Creator. It is good chance to forget

one's worries, express repentance for one's wrong doings in the course of the day or week, as the case may be, and also make resolutions for better living in every respect.

It is equally important to follow this rule when one visits holy shrines such as Srirangam, Tirupati, Palani, Kancheepuram and Rameswaram. I know how thousands of people rush to Tirupati from Madras, spend 30-45 minutes on the shrine up the Hill and rush back to Madras. I should add that I have done this on not a few occasions! On the whole, such visits do not serve the primary



Mumbadevi Temple, Bombay

purpose of achieving peace of mind and contemplation of the Supreme.

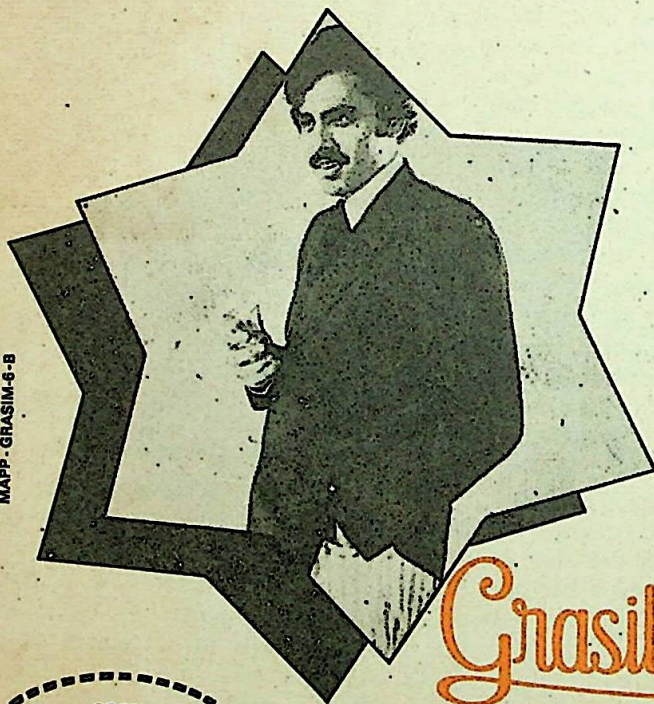
For many years now, I have found it possible to visit my family Deity on Tirumala Hills, everyday and, in fact, several times a day! The strategy is simply to make one's mind, rather than one's body, do the pilgrimage.

As soon as I wake up in the morning, mentally I proceed to Tirupati (down the Hills), then go up the Hills, have a wash in the sacred tank, pay the first obeisance to God Varaha, then proceed to the Lord Venkateswara temple, prostrate at the en-



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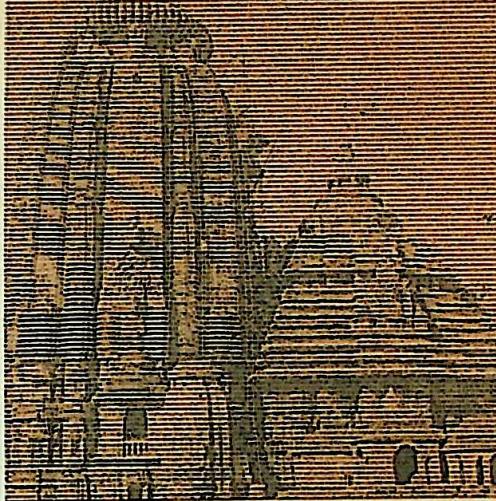


trance, go round in *pradakshanam* and go into the sanctum sanctorum, receiving the holy water and *prasadam*. On the way back, again mentally, I visit the shrine of Goddess Padmavati at Tiruchanur and return to Madras or wherever I happen to be staying, whether in India or abroad.

This mental pilgrimage, would the readers please believe me, gives me as much joy and peace of mind as if I visited the holy place in my mortal body. On the other hand, I am saved the expenditure and physical discomforts involved in a trip, however philosophically we may bear them in the interests of the pilgrimage.

What I do with regard to the pilgrimage to Tirupati, I sometimes do to visit temples in my home town, Mysore. In this fashion, I visit the Lord Venkateswara temple there, in the renovation of which my family has taken some interest, as also the shrine of Goddess Chamundeswari on the Hills in Mysore.

The strategy which I have outlined above in regard to visit of temples could be extended to other matters. Any sensible person should realise before long true happiness comes not from material possessions or positions of power

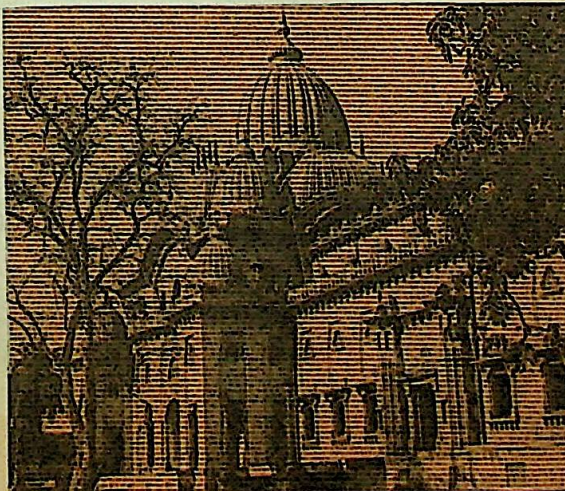


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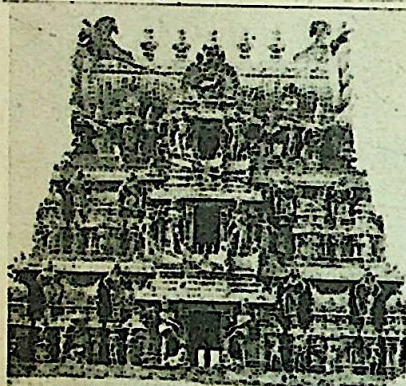
Belur Math





sophy of all for one and one for all. This philosophy is very much needed in the present world, among individuals, communities and nations. There is much avoidable discontent, misunderstanding and strife.

SHAVAN'S JOURNAL



Inner Gopuram, Lord Venkateswara Temple, Tirumalai.

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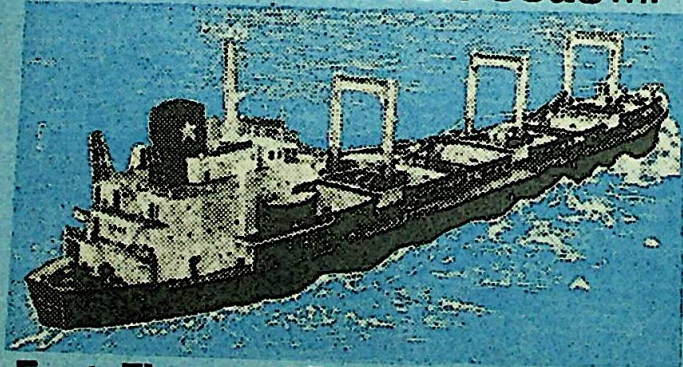
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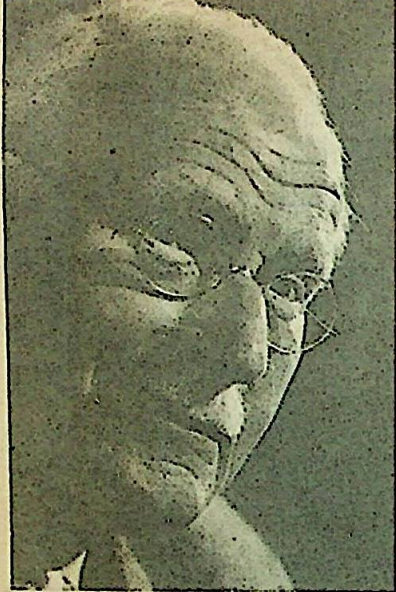
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Dr. Carl Jung, one of the father figures of Psychology along with Sigmund Freud and Alfred Adler warns that "the Eastern nations are threatened by a quick disintegration of their spiritual goods and what comes into their place cannot always be considered to belong to the best of the Western mind. Therefore, one may look upon sages like Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Ramana as modern prophets."

# Sri Ramana and His Message to Modern Man

CARL JUNG

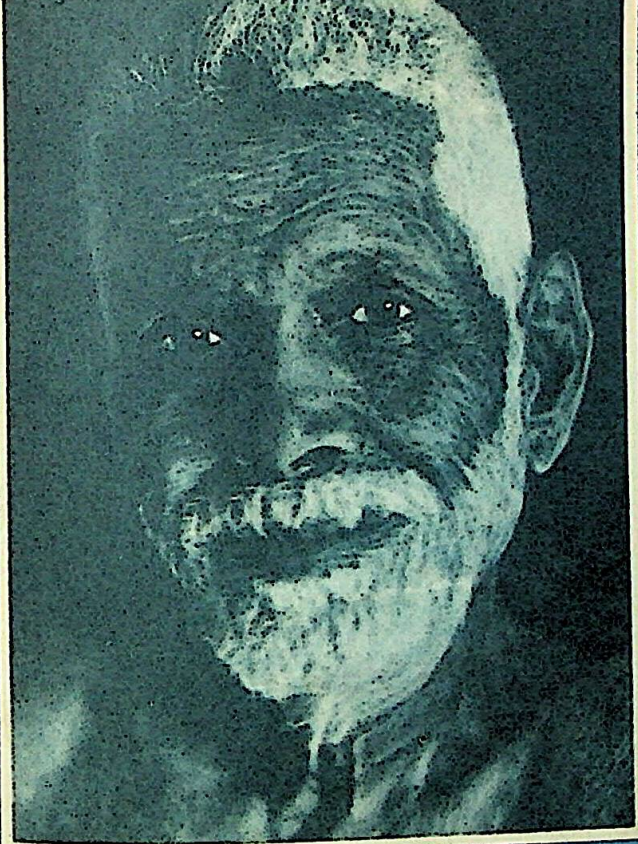
**SRI RAMANA** is a true son of the Indian earth. He is genuine and, in addition to that, something quite phenomenal. In India he is the whitest spot in a white space.

What we find in the life and teachings of Sri Ramana is the purest of India; with its breath of world-liberated and liberating humanity, it is a chant of millenniums. This melody is built up on a single, great motif, which, in a thousand colourful reflexes, rejuvenates itself within the

Indian spirit, and the latest incarnation of which is Sri Ramana Maharshi himself.

The identification of the Self with God will strike the European as shocking. It is a specifically oriental Realization, expressed in Sri Ramana's utterances. Psychology cannot contribute anything further to it, except the remark that it lies far beyond its scope to propose such a thing. However, it is clear to the Indian that the Self as spiritual source is not different from





Ramana, "the whitest spot in a white space."

God; and in so far as man abides in his Self, he is not only contained in God but is God Himself. Sri Ramana is quite clear in this respect.

The Goal of Eastern practices is the same as that of Western Mysticism: the focus is shifted from the I to the Self, from Man to God. This means that the I disappears in the Self, and Man in God. A similar effort is described in the *exercitia spiritualia*, in which the 'personal property,'

the 'I' is subjugate to the highest possible degree to the possession of Christ. Sri Ramakrishna adopted the same position in regard to the Self, only with him the dilemma between the 'I' and the Self comes a little more closely to the foreground. Sri Ramana declares unmistakably that the real purpose of spiritual practice is the dissolution of the 'I'. Ramakrishna, however, shows a somewhat hesitating attitude in this respect. Though he says,



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"As long as the I-sense lasts, so long are true knowledge (Jnana) and Liberation (Mukti) impossible," yet he must acknowledge the fatal nature of *ahankara*. He says, "How very few can obtain this Union (Samadhi) and free themselves from the 'I'? It is very rarely possible. Talk as much as you want, isolate yourself continuously, still this, 'I' will always return to you. Cut down the poplar tree today, and you will find tomorrow it forms new shoots. When you ultimately find that this 'I' cannot be destroyed, let it remain as 'I' the servant." In relation to this concession, Sri Ramana is certainly the more radical.

The changing relations between these two quantities, the 'I' and the Self, represent a field of experience which the introspective consciousness of the East has explored to a degree almost unattainable by the western human being. The philosophy of the East, which is so very different from ours, represent to us a highly valuable present, which, however, we "must obtain in order to possess." Sri Ramana's words once again sum up the principal things which the Spirit of India has accumulated during thousands of years in contemplation of the Inner Self; and the individual life and work of the

The life of man is a dubious experiment. It is a tremendous phenomenon only in numerical terms. Individually, it is so fleeting, so insufficient, that it is literally a miracle that anything can exist and develop at all. I was impressed by that fact long ago, as a young medical student, and it seemed to me miraculous that I should not have been prematurely annihilated.

Life has always seemed to me like a plant that lives on its rhizome. Its true life is invisible hidden in the rhizome. The part that appears above ground lasts only a single summer. Then it withers away—an ephemeral apparition. When we think of the unending growth and decay of life and civilisations, we cannot escape the impression of absolute nullity. Yet I have never lost a sense of something that lives and endures underneath the external flux. What we see is the blossom, which passes. The rhizome remains.

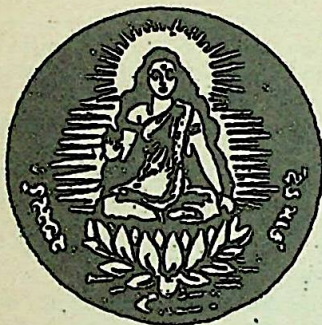
In the end the only events in my life worth telling are those when the imperishable world irrupted into this transitory one.

—From Prologue to "Memories, Dreams, Reflections" by Carl Jung.

Maharshi exemplifies once more the innermost striving of the Indian people to find the liberating original Source.

The Eastern nations are threatened by a quick disintegration of their spiritual goods, and what comes into their place cannot always be considered to belong to the best of the Western





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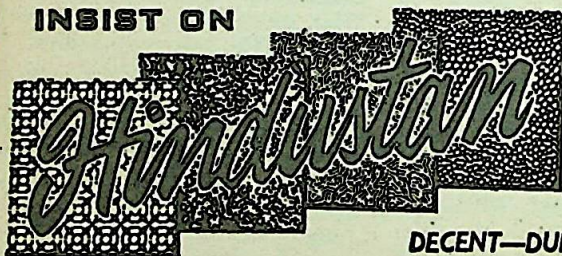
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mind. Therefore, one may look upon Sages like Sri Ramakrishna and Sri Ramana as modern prophets. They, not only remind us of the thousands of years old spiritual culture of India, but also directly embody it. Their life and teachings form an impressive warning not to forget the demand of the soul in all the new things of Western civilization and their materialistic-technical and commercial concerns of the world.

The breathless impulse to obtain and possess in the political, social and intellectual fields, which is rummaging the apparent unappeasable passion in the soul of the Westerner, is also spreading continuously in the East and threatens to bear consequences not yet to be overlooked. Not only in India but also in China, much has already been lost in which once the life of the Soul lived and flourished. The externalization-culture of the West can truly clear away many evils, the destruction of which seems to be very desirable and advantageous. But, as experience has shown, this progress is bought too dearly with a loss of spiritual culture. It is undoubtedly more comfortable to dwell in a well-oriented and hygienically furnished house, but that does not answer the question as to who is the dweller in this house,

and whether his soul enjoys a similar state of order and purity, that is, like that of the house serving for external life.

Once man is set to the pursuit of external things, he is never satisfied, as experience shows, with the mere necessities of life, but always strives after more and more, which true to his prejudices, he always seeks in external things. He forgets entirely that in spite of all external success, inwardly he remains the same, and therefore complains of his poverty when he owns only one motorcar instead of two like others around him. Certainly, the external life of man can bear many improvements and beautifications, but they lose their significance to the extent to which the inner man cannot keep up with them. The provision with all "necessities" is without doubt, a source of happiness which is not to be under-estimated.

But above and beyond it, the inner man raises his claim, which cannot be satisfied by any external goods; and the less this voice is heard in the hunt for 'the wonderful things' of this world, the more the inner man becomes a source of inexplicable bad luck and understandable unhappiness in the midst of conditions of life from which one



would expect something quite different.

The externalization leads to an incurable suffering, because nobody can understand how one could suffer because of one's own nature. Nobody is surprised at his own insatiability, but looks upon it as his birth-right; he does not realize that the one-sidedness of the diet of his soul ultimately leads to the most serious disturbances of balance. It is this which forms the illness of the Westerner, and he does not rest till he has infected the whole world with his greedy restlessness.

The wisdom and Mysticism of the East have, therefore, a very

great deal to tell us, provided they speak in their own inimitable speech. They should remind us of what we possess, in our own culture of similar things and have already been forgotten, and direct our attention to that which we put aside as unimportant, namely the destiny of our inner man. The life and teachings of Sri Ramana are not only important for the Indians but also for the Westerners. Not only do they form a record of great human interest, but also a warning message to a humanity which threatens to lose itself in the chaos of its unconsciousness and lack of self-control.

□ □ □

*From Jung's Introduction to Dr. Zimmer's "The Way to Self."*

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Shri R. R. Chari, a freelance photographer trudged along these hilly paths to drink in the beauty of the ethereal vistas and also to share his delights with our readers by means of the lensman's art. In the pages that follow are six vignettes for you to savour and meditate upon.





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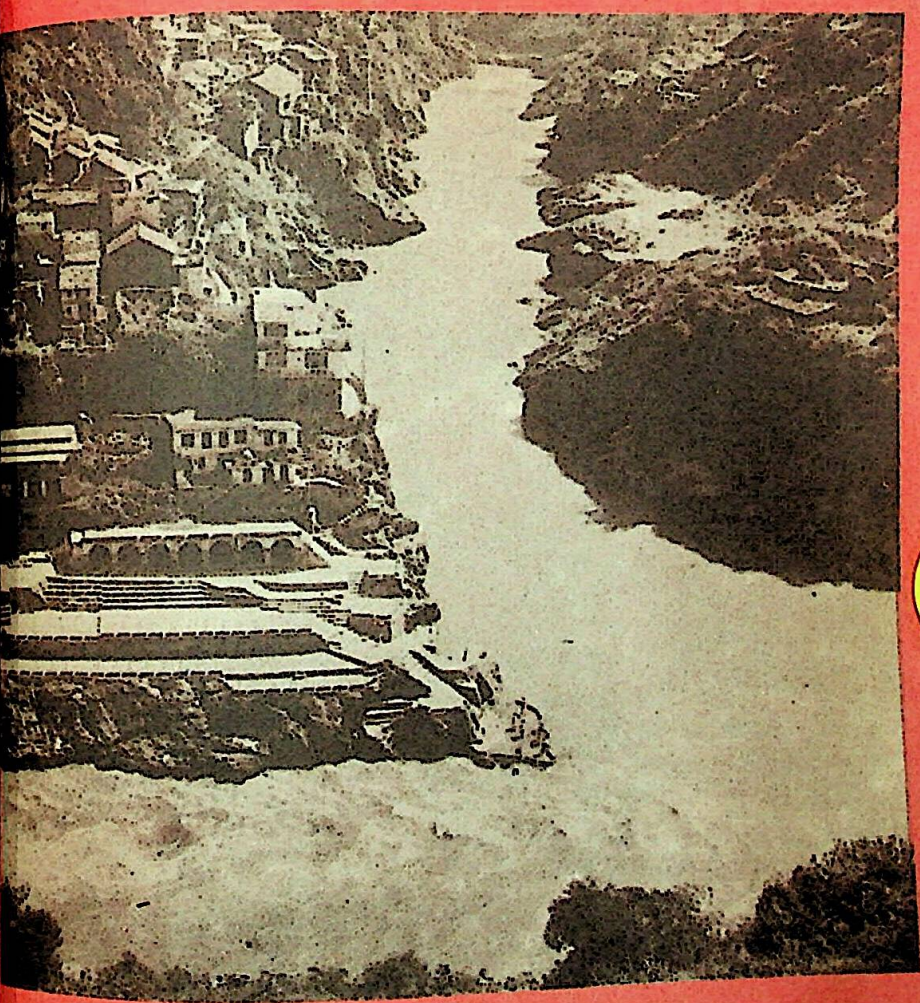
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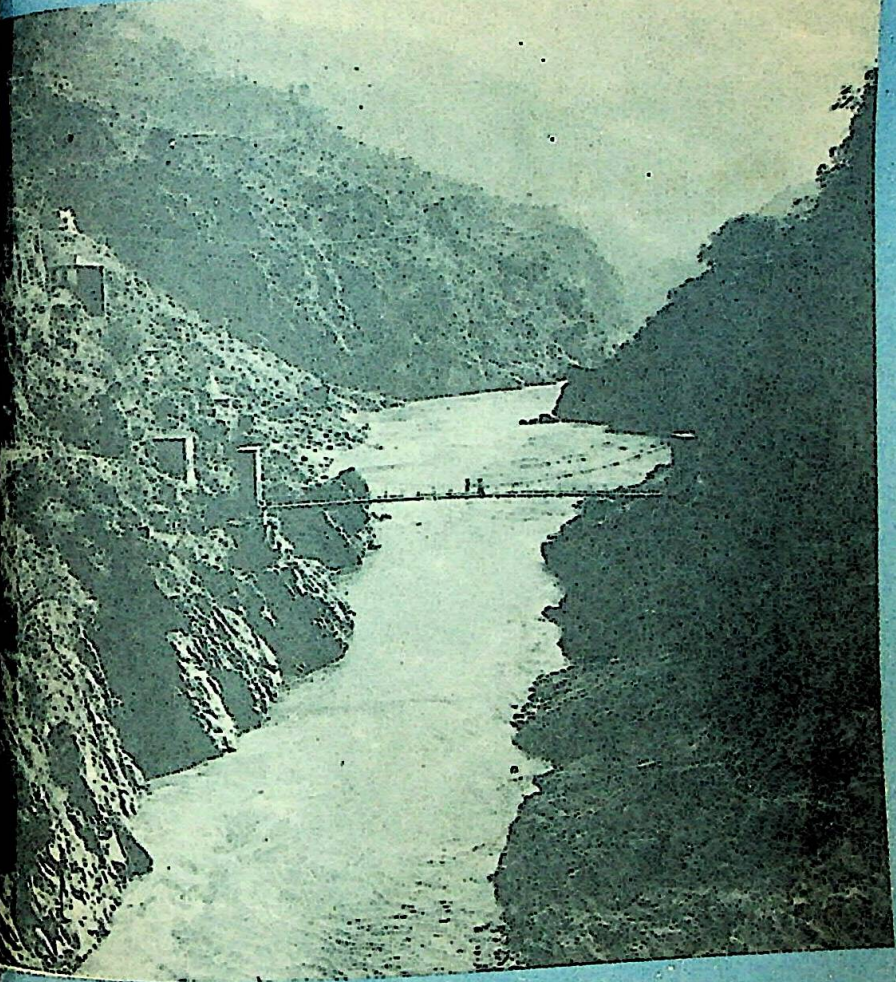
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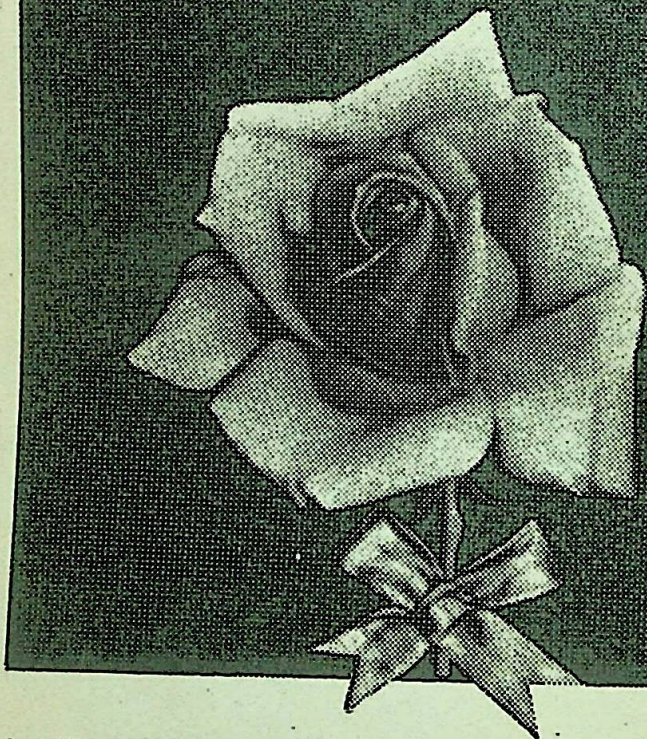


### **RUDRAPRAYAG**

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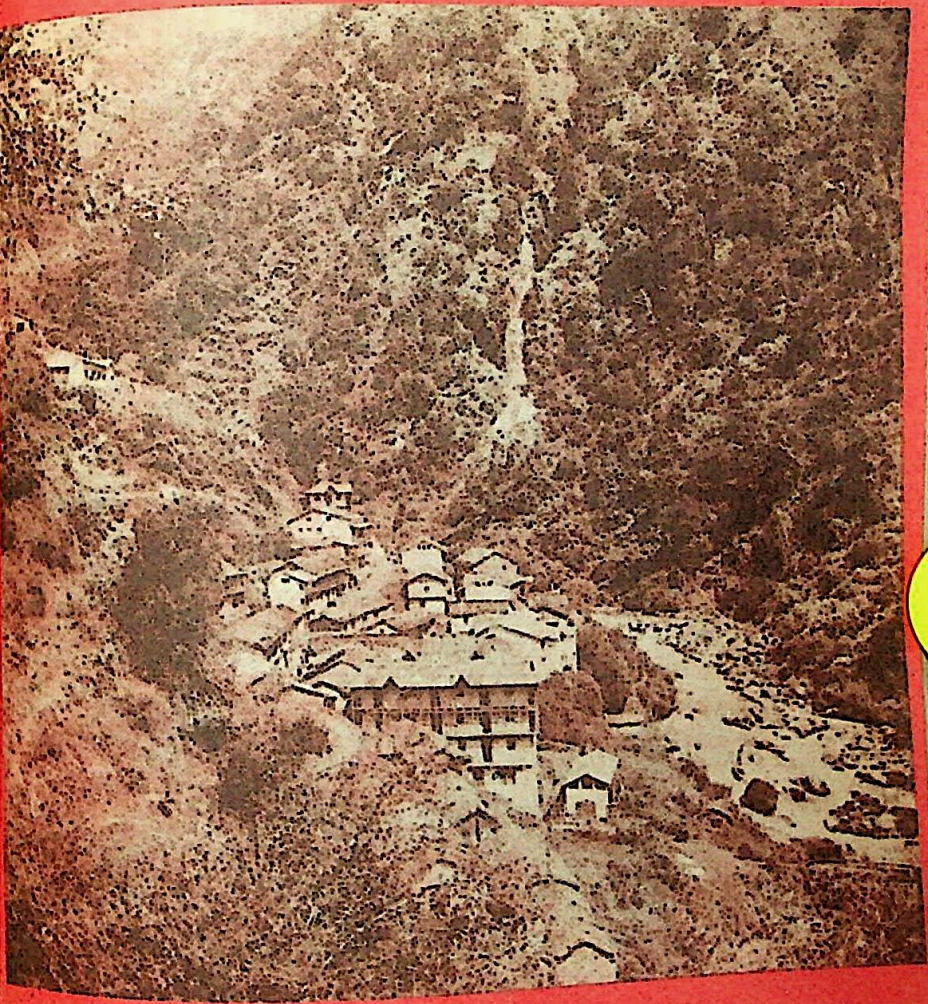
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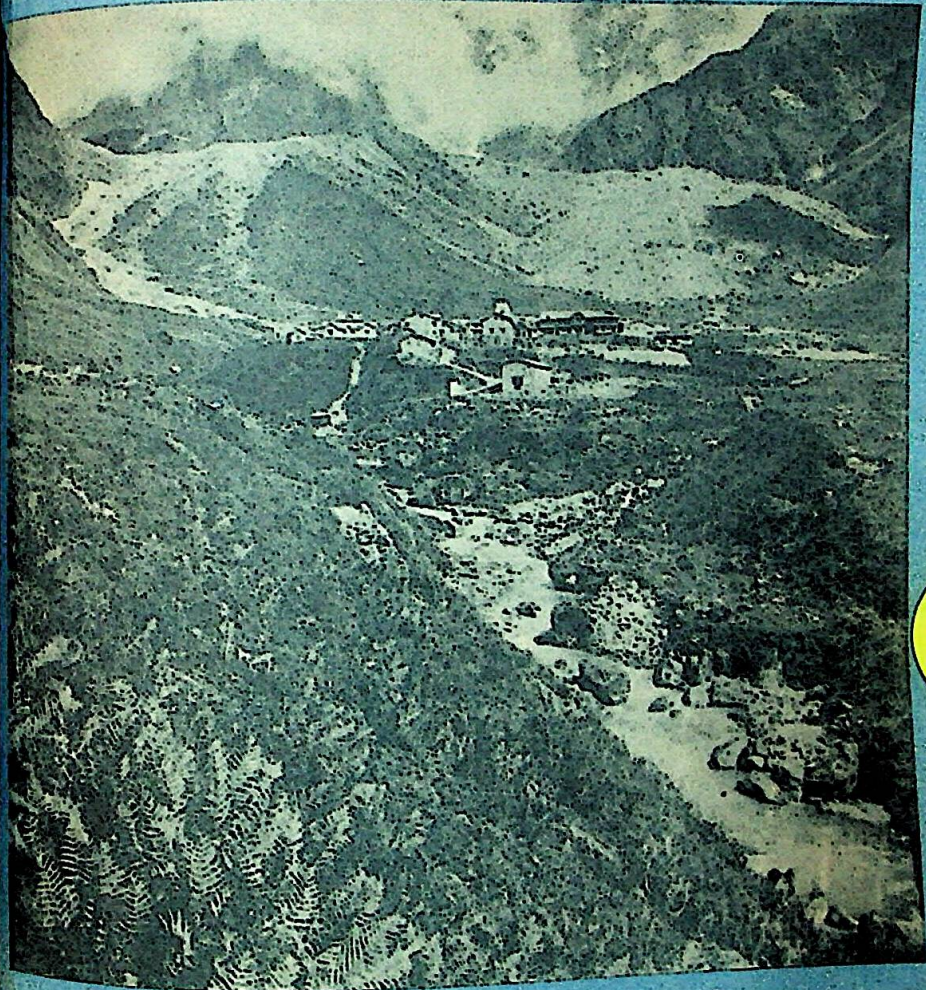
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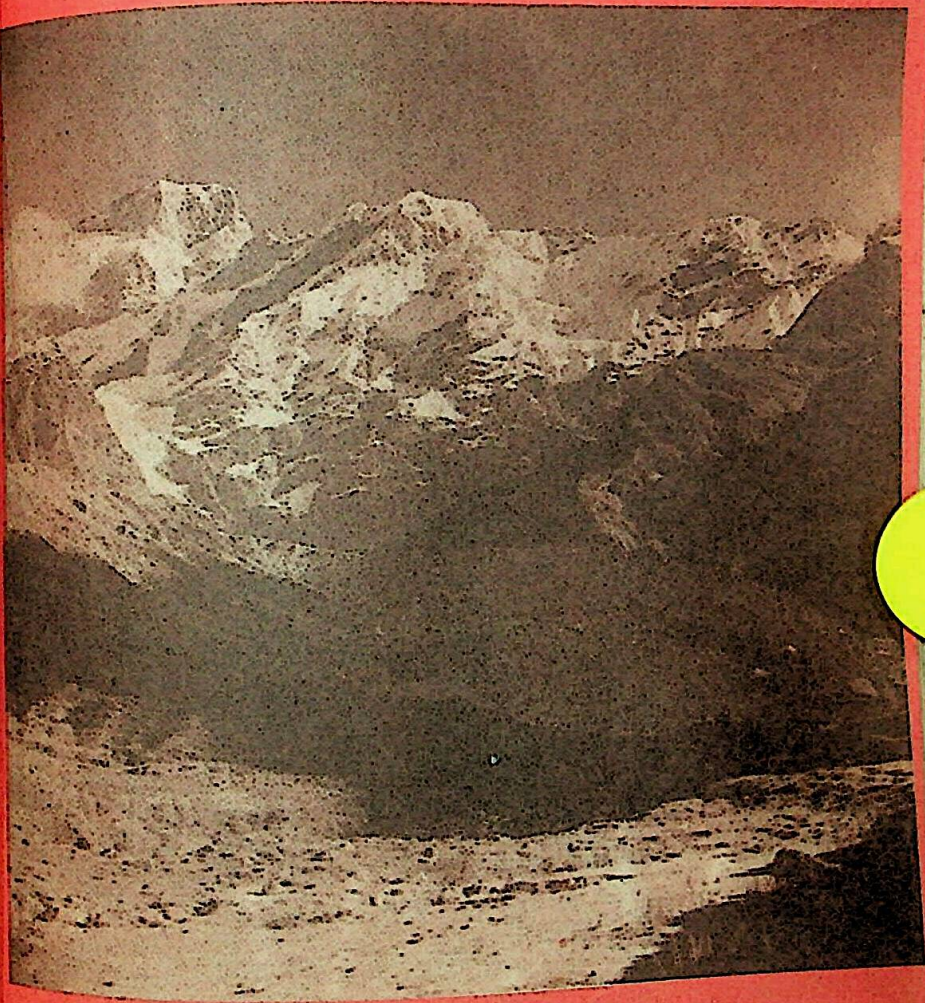
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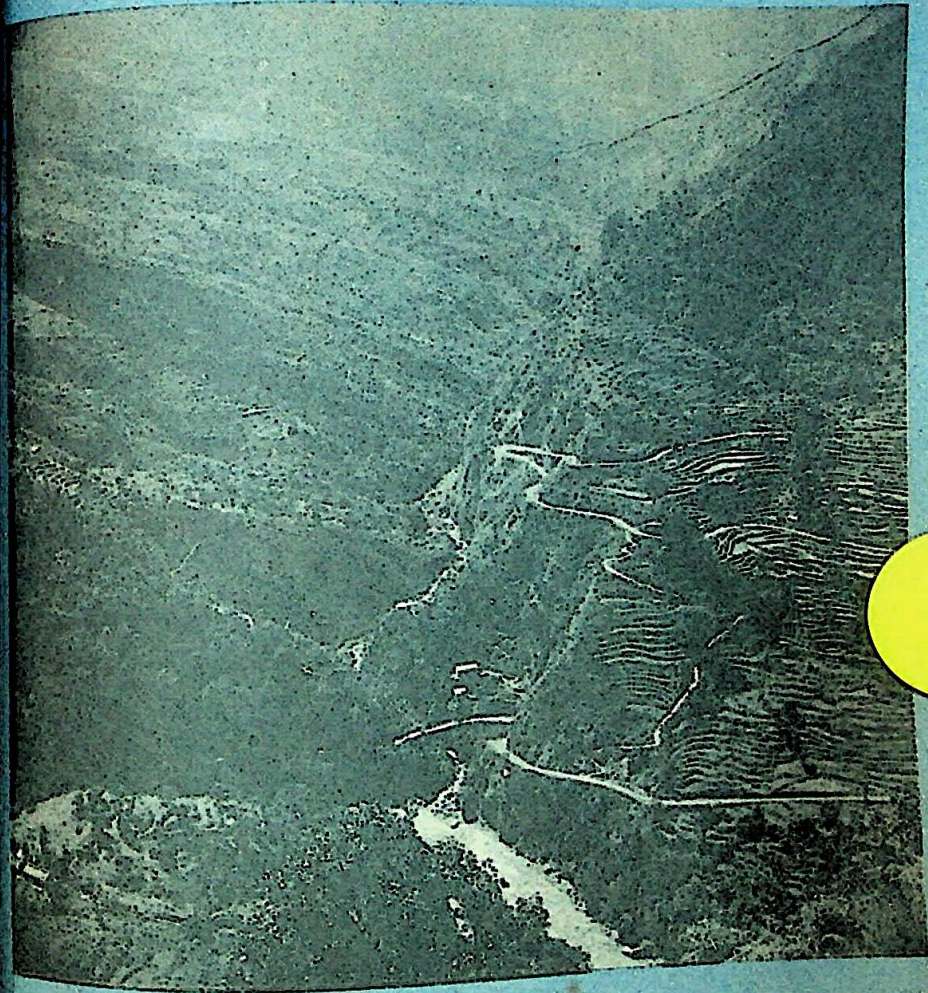
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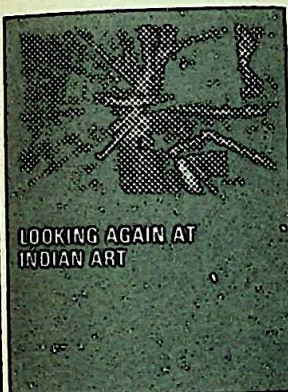
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The search, however, does not end here. Ever since the dawn of civilization, man has put to himself the vital and persistent questions: Who am

I? Where have I come from? And where am I going? Physical nature is only a phenomenal world subject to constant change. There is another world, however, 'the kingdom within.' Inner world is subtle as distinct from the outer which is gross.

My endeavour will be to show that the two worlds are really one, as the Reality is one. The one without the other is partial truth. To get the whole truth man must also be a whole and complete man, not merely a physical man. Science deals



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with the outer world and spirituality is concerned with the inner. To get a complete and integral picture of the whole truth, one must understand both.

Newton found that the universe was orderly and perfectly balanced. On observing the speeds and movements of the planets round the sun and of the moons round the planets, Newton remarked that, if the speed of the planets were too high, they would escape the solar system. If the speed were too low, they would fall into the sun. He concluded:

*A most beautiful system... could only proceed from the counsel and dominion of an Intelligent and Powerful Being.*

The scientist may well ask: Did the same considerations of order and balance pertain to the world of living beings as well as to the world of celestial bodies? Newton was certain that the answer was in the affirmative.

Long before Newton made the above observation, Rishis (sages) in India were engaged in research into the inner Reality, 'the kingdom of God within us.' They were spiritual scientists who experimented on the life and thought of man and discovered cosmic laws. They studied the state of man in wakefulness, dreaming, dreamless sleep and Turiya. *Brihadaranyaka Upanishad* records that the great Rishi, Yajnavalkya, noticing the same phenomenon as

Newton did, told Gargi: "Under the mighty rule of this Immutable, O Gargi, the sun and the moon are held in their positions; under the mighty rule of this Immutable, O Gargi, heaven and earth maintain their position; under the mighty rule of this Immutable, O Gargi, moments (*Mu-*

THE ASTRONOMERS SAY,  
HOW BIG IS UNIVERSE  
AND THE CHEMISTS AND  
BIOLOGISTS TELL US,  
HOW SMALL IT IS.

*hurtas*), days and nights, fortnights, months, seasons and years are operated in perfect order. It (the Brahman) is the controller of all, the lord of all, the ruler of all, .... It is the protector of all beings. It (the Brahman) is the bank (or the bridge) which serves as the boundary to keep the different worlds apart, i.e., prevents them from clashing together. This is the power that dwells and rules in every thing, and is in its essence Consciousness."

Newton's observation and conclusion was an echo of what had been ascertained through and experienced by the Rishis during the Vedic period. On the controversy whether the universe is finite or infinite, Newton asserted that it is finite as God



alone is infinite.<sup>1</sup>

In *Aitareya Upanishad*, it is stated: "All Gods, all elemental substances and all organic beings—all this is guided by consciousness, grounded in consciousness; by consciousness this universe is governed; consciousness is its foundation, consciousness is Brahman."<sup>2</sup> Gods here are the various forces and aspects of Divine power operating in the universe.

In his book *Science and the Modern World*, Whitehead asked: "What is the status of the enduring stability of the order of Nature?" and he said: "There is the summary answer, which refers Nature to some greater Réality standing behind it. This Reality occurs in the history of thought under many names. The absolute Brahman, the Order of Heaven, God." The author speaks of a wider evolution beyond nature itself, and within which the nature is but a limited mode. To this, however, I shall come later.

To the same effect, speaks James Jeans in his book, *Mysterious Universe*. He says that the universe shows the evidence of a designing or controll-

ing power that has something in common with our own individual minds . . . . (and that) we cannot claim to have discovered more than a very faint glimmer of light at the best.

While in the seventeenth cen-

"BY SPACE THE UNIVERSE  
ENCOMPASSES AND  
SWALLOWS ME AS AN  
ATOM; BY THOUGHT I  
ENCOMPASS IT."

tury Newton's basis of observation was the solar system and cosmology and the law of universal gravitation, scientist Julius Adler<sup>3</sup> in the twentieth century was engaged in research into the nature of unicellular Bacilli (A.E. colicell), size one micrometer (1,000th of a millimeter) wide and twice as long. He found that this one-cell organism felt attracted by, and moved towards, certain chemicals, while it was repelled by, and moved away from, other chemicals. The scientist during his research extending over 15 years could not discover the reason for this

1. Scientific American: Cosmology-1, p. 20.
2. Duessen's Philosophy of the Upanishadas, p. 139. I have substituted 'substances' for 'forces', and have adopted Sri Aurobindo's translation of the expression महाभूतानि.

3. Scientific American April 1976, p. 40. In Sanskrit usage स्तम्भ is a unicellular organism, the lowest expression of life in the scale of evolution. Sankara's "Vivekachoodamani," Sloka 387, translated by Swami Chinmaya-nanda.



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phenomenon. He described it as a mystery. Wherefrom did this least-developed organism acquire the capacity to choose, the power to decide, in favour of or against the substance presented to it? The Upanishadic sage would say that the essence of Brahman is consciousness. Brahman pervades the entire creation. Each part partakes of the quality of the whole. For the sage the answer was on the surface.

In the seventeenth century Francis Bacon had reached the conclusion: "It is certain that all bodies whatsoever, though they have no sense, yet they have perception, for, when one body is applied to another, there is a kind of election to embrace that which is agreeable and to exclude or expel that which is ingrate...."

The problem is to be appreciated in the background of the vastness and the littleness in the universe. Whitehead truly remarked: the astronomers say, how big is universe and the chemists and biologists tell us, how small it is.

The closest planet is 36,000,000 miles distant from the sun, and the farthest more than 3,500,000,000 miles. Distance of earth from the sun is 93,000,000 miles, the sun moves through space in the milky way. The milky way (galaxy) itself is in motion. The sun participates in the rotation of the milky way.

The temperature at the centre of the sun is several million degrees. The sun is one of the countless billions in the milky way. And there are millions, perhaps billions, of such galaxies. The nearest star *Alpha Centauri* is 25 trillion miles away = 4.3 light years distant. The most distant galaxy in the universe is 8 billion light years from the earth. It was identified in 1975 "By space the universe encompasses and swallows me as an atom; by thought I encompass it,"<sup>4</sup> so said Pascal. Man is really an insignificant atom in this vastness, yet he has an incredibly great potentiality.

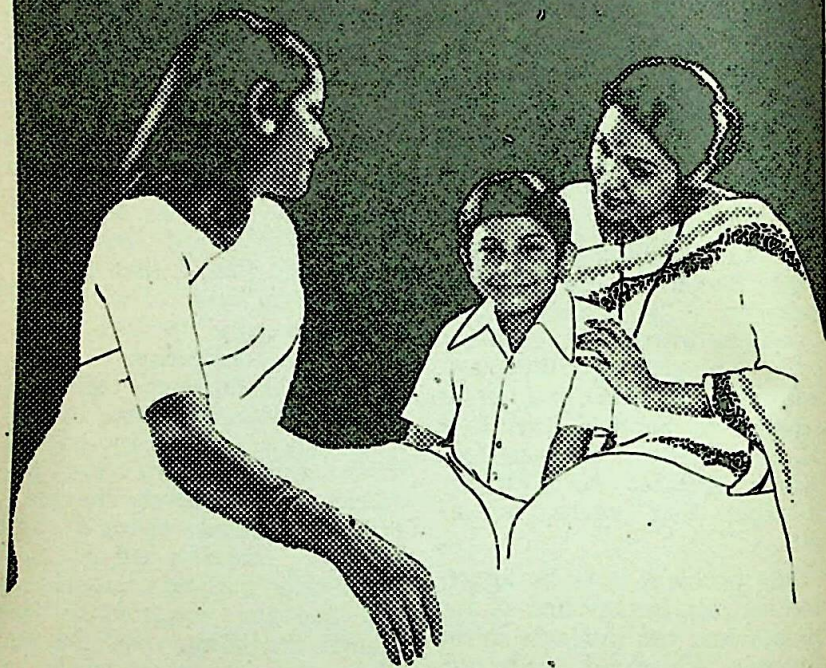
As to the littleness, each element consists of minute molecules which are composed of minute atoms. Every atom has an electron (negatively charged), proton (positively charged) and neutron. Scientists tell us that the nucleus may be compared to the sun and electrons to the planets circulating round the sun. There is a constant whirl of electrons in the atom. The year 1932, described by scientists as *annus mirabilis*, saw the first splitting of the nucleus made by artificially accelerated particles.<sup>5</sup>

Thus we see in nature movements throughout the universe and constant change—creation, growth and death (i.e. from seed to tree to fruit and to seed again).

4. The World Book Science Annual 1977.
5. Scientific American: Cosmology + 1, p. 31.



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But behind all these changes and mutations there is stability, regularity, and precision. In God's scheme there is no element of chance and uncertainty. "God does not play dice" was the firm belief of Einstein. The physical laws operating on the earth are identical with those operating in every part of the solar system and indeed in the entire universe. All things, great and small, are subject to fixed laws. The stability, certainty and precision indicate one Maker of the laws. If there had been different makers and different laws, there would have been chaos and confusion. The universe would not have been created, and even if created, would not have survived.

A close analogy is a screen in a film show. The persons and scenes on the screen change but the screen remains unaltered. While we see the persons and scenes, we don't see the screen. But without the screen the film cannot be seen. Scenes and figures keep on shifting, appearing and disappearing: the substratum remains the same. There is the unity, one-ness, behind the universal change. There must be one author, designer, planner, controller, indeed one Intelligence and Consciousness in the universe. The movement in the universe and God's relation to it is best illustrated by the Upanishadic text:

ईशावास्यमिदं सर्वं

यत्किञ्च जगत्स्यां जगत् ।

"All this, whatever moves in this Universe, including the Universe itself moving, is indwelt or pervaded or enveloped or clothed by the Lord...."6 The word ईश connotes Ruler also.

In passing, I might refer to the concept of Nada Brahman, the power of sound which is Brahman's power. The Greek philosopher, Pythagoras, stated that the pitch of notes depends on the rapidity of vibrations. It was also stated that the planets move at different rates of motion. He concluded that the planets make sounds in their motion according to their different rates and that, as all things in nature are harmoniously made, the different sounds must harmonise. This is the origin of the theory of the harmony or music of the spheres. The word "Om" in Upanishadic literature is the highest symbol of Nada Brahman.

It is interesting to study the evolution of man and his future in this evolution. In *Mundaka Upanishad* the process of evolution is thus described:

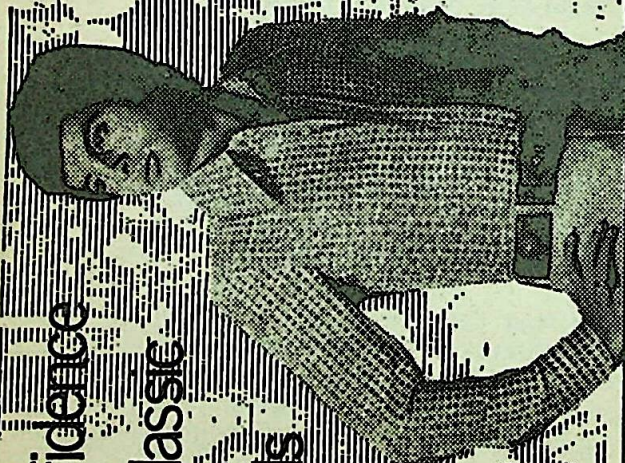
*Brahman grows by His energy at work and then from Him is Matter born, and out of Matter life, and mind and truth and the world.*

Energy is the first step in creation, the second is matter. The 'world' in this context means

6. Swami Chinmyananda's translation of "Isavasyopanishad" Sloka 1.



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different planes of consciousness. Thus the order in evolution is energy, matter, life, mind, truth and different planes of consciousness and, after the highest level, immortality. How beautifully the Upanishad describes the various stages of evolution. Scientific discoveries take us upto the stage of mind because the scientific methods are limited to the application of the mind and the senses. Truth cannot be discovered merely by resort to methods applicable to science alone; upto a certain stage, there is close correspondence between what has been discovered by the scientist and that declared by the written text of the Upanishad.

It is now acknowledged that energy is the source of the universe. Moreover, various energies are convertible into each other. Heat can be converted into electricity and *vice versa*.

Einstein enunciated the formula:

$$E = mc^2$$

In this formula, E stands for energy, 'm' for mass and 'c' is equal to the speed of light i.e. 1,86,000 miles per second. Energy is convertible into matter and possesses mass also. In the sun matter is converted into energy and on the earth energy is converted into matter. Brahman is the primeval source of energy. It is also acknowledged that from inorganic matter life

was evolved.<sup>7</sup> Thus Matter became the source of life and life in the course of evolution developed mind.

According to the scriptures, the level of consciousness of an average man is not ultimate. There are several planes of consciousness ultimately leading to complete unity with Brahman, merging in the source itself.

According to the Upanishads the universe is but an emanation from and part of Brahman Itself.

The Upanishadic text says:—

*As from one high-kindled fire thousands of different sparks are born,—so from the Immutable manifold beings are born and even into that they depart.<sup>8</sup> As the spider puts out and gathers in, as it fashioneth its web and its threads are from its own body, so the One God than whom nought else existeth, wrapt Himself from sight in the web born of eternal matter.<sup>9</sup>*

Matter contains life in itself. It is instinct with the stuff of life, as Sri Aurobindo puts it. Life is instinct with the stuff of mind (unconscious sensation, will, intelligence).

The law of natural progression shows different formations of the same Being and Consciousness. As evolution progresses, man is

7. Khurana's experiments would be relevant here.

8. Mundaka Upanishad II-1-1.

9. "Shwetashwatara Upanishad" VI



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gradually releasing himself from the limitations of time, space and causation to which the universe is subject. Senses are only instruments of the mind. They are not fundamental. At the ultimate stage in Evolution, the knower of Brahman frees himself from all limitations and therefore himself becomes Brahman. Brahman is eternal, as time does not pertain to it; It is indivisible as space does not condition it; It is imperishable as it is not subject to causation.

It is possible to achieve Nirvana in this very life. This realisation is the state of *jeewan mukta*. In that state the body becomes irrelevant. The individual soul is a part of the universal soul in the same way as a wave is a part of the ocean. It emerges from the ocean itself, when there is disturbance; it merges in the ocean when calm and peace prevail.

The Upanishads say:

*Brahman is established in our secret being and lodged in the cavern heart of things.<sup>11</sup> Finer than the fine, bigger than the biggest, the Self hides in the secret heart of the creature . . . . That which is the luminous, that which is smaller than the atoms, that in which are set the worlds and their people.<sup>12</sup>*

The Inner kingdom is thus described:—

*This my Atman residing in (the lotus of) the heart is greater than the earth, greater than the sky, greater than heaven, greater than all these worlds.<sup>13</sup>*

Reason dictates that there cannot be any conflict between science and spirituality. Both are parts of an undivided whole, parts of one Reality or Truth. They are two faces of the same coin. Their synthesis is complete. In ignorance we separate them. Brahman cannot be divided; It is the one Reality behind different forms and names.

Lastly, what is the relevance of this synthesis of science and spirituality to the present-day world? Religion enhances the moral and ethical tone of man's behaviour. Science and technology has resulted in growing materialism in our lives. Excessive materialism causes unhappiness. There are problems of disarmament and ecology in the international sphere; there are many problems in national spheres. Can any big problem be solved without injecting an element of spirituality in our lives? Unless thought processes are changed and hearts purified, we cannot achieve anything substantial.

Gandhiji spiritualised politics and social life. He could achieve

10. Katha Upanishad I-2-12.

11. " " I-2-20.

12. Mundaka Upanishad II-2-2.

13. Chandogya Upanishad III-14-3.



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—Swami Vivekananda.

freedom for our millions from the foreign yoke. He also pointed out how we could liberate ourselves from the age-long prejudices and hateful practices. The measure of success of our democracy will be the extent to which we are able to preserve the spiritual element in our national life.

Arnold Toynbee said: A spiritual Renaissance inspiring the establishment of a human global Commonwealth alone can save us from disaster. A spiritual Renaissance can only be a fitting answer to the dangers man has created for himself.

When it is asked, how can man, a finite being, understand the Infinite, what is meant is that Brahman is inexpressible in terms of finite knowledge, yet It is attainable. Truth is available to experience or self-revelation.

"The Self is not to be won by eloquent teaching, nor by brain," power, nor by much learning," Sanatkumara told Narada: "Whatsoever you have studied here, really it is only a name. It is only when the Brahman is realised as one's own self that one overcomes grief and sorrow."

But the "path is sharp like a razor's edge, difficult and hard

to traverse." You cannot experience the flavour of sugar by reading books on sugar, or cure your malady by merely reading a treatise on medicine without using the proper medicine. Sankara said: Brahman cannot be realised by merely repeating the word Brahman. The correct method is intensive practice of Yoga, but before it can succeed, complete purification of mind and heart is necessary. □ □ □

14. Kathopanishad I-2-23.

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Yudhishtira had managed to get a semblance of peace in his mind when he devoted all his thoughts and all his time in governing the kingdom. But, at the back of his mind there was still a feeling of guilt gnawing at his vitals. He could not—would not—get over the fact that he had caused the death of his cousins and his kinsmen.

Vyasa came to him and told him that he would be cleansed of the sin if he performed the *yaga* by name *Ashvamedha*. This suggestion was welcomed by everyone. Krishna came at the request of Yudhishtira and also approved of the suggestion.

Everyone was happy that Yudhishtira had something to do. This would keep him from brooding. Arjuna was particularly thrilled. It seemed ages since he had taken the Gandiva in his hand. His powerful arms were itching for fight. But Yudhishtira was against all unlawful fighting. He would not let them collect even the customary wealth, the tribute which vassal kings had to pay the Emperor. "If there is some other way by which I can acquire wealth, tell me, Krishna, and we will proceed with our plans", said Yudhishtira. Krishna thought for a while and sent the brothers to the north where a king had performed a *yajna* previously and



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had left all the golden vessels and other necessary utensils there. They came back with immense wealth and the *yajna* was performed three times by the king. Vyasa presided over the function and Krishna was the honoured guest as was the custom with the Pandavas.

Krishna spent some time with them all after the *yajna*, and when he went back to Dvaraka he took Arjuna with him.

## 10

### *Vidura Lays Down His Bow*

It was just after the thirteenth year of the exile of the Pandavas. Vain efforts were made by them to get back their half of the kingdom from Duryodhana. The court of Dhritarashtra was

a hotbed of intrigue. Old Bhishma tried to advise Duryodhana to make peace with the Pandavas. Drona in his own way tried to say the same thing. But it was all to no purpose. Duryodhana was bent on war; either war or the return of the Pandavas to the forest. With this end in view Dhritarashtra sent Sanjaya the charioteer to the Pandava camp in Upaplavya asking them to avert the war. He particularly requested the gentle-hearted and noble Yudhishtira to go back to the forest instead of "desiring" the kingdom. Sanjaya came back to Hastina and he spoke harshly to the old king censuring his avarice.

The king could not sleep that night. Try as he might, he





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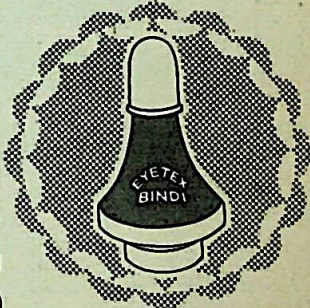
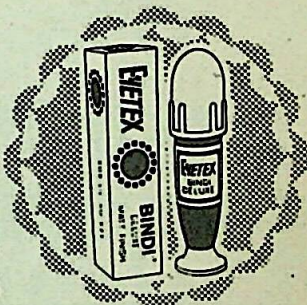
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could not. He sent for Vidura his brother and asked him to comfort him. Vidura had nothing but contempt for the blind king and his querulous moods. But, at the same time he was sorry for his brother. He said: "My dear brother, you say you cannot sleep. I know why you are not able to sleep. You are trying to be unjust to the sons of your dead brother. It is your sinful nature which is robbing you of your sleep. Listen to me. Let me take you back to the days when we had just lost Pandu. Do you remember the day when Kunti came to us with her five sons? You disliked the youngsters from that day. I know about it. I knew, too, about the dastardly plot you hatched with your son on the advice of Kanika to destroy them at Varanavata. You sent them to that city knowing full well that they would be burnt to death in the house of lac. I saved my brother's children and I know you have not forgiven me for it. You were given a second chance. Did you take it? No. Poor Yudhishtira was given the dry and barren piece of land by name Khandava-prastha.

"Because he made it beautiful, because he and his brothers were able to subdue all the kings of Bharatavarsha and perform the *Rajasuya*, your son be-

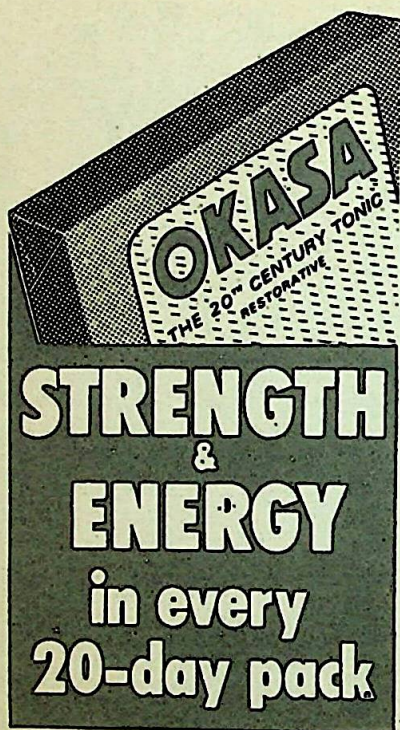
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came highly jealous of them and made up his mind to rob them. You endorsed his action in every way. You built the gambling hall and you cheated the sons of your brother. They lost their kingdom and themselves, too. And when that unfortunate child, their queen Draupadi, with her hair and mantle all awry appealed to you for justice, for succour from the assault on her, you paid no heed to her words. And you allowed them to be banished to the forest for thirteen years. Was that not wrong? And now, what has happened? Yudhishtira has just fulfilled the conditions of the exile. He stayed in the forest for twelve years and the thirteenth year has also been completed. Now, after all this, he asks you for justice. All he wants is his share of the kingdom and you with your sons, are too avaricious to part with your ill-gotten gains. You refuse to listen to him. You send word to him asking him to go back to the forest. Is that not wrong? Even now it is not too late. In your old age you can have peace if you listen to Krishna who is coming to you with a message of peace."

Vidura tried to explain *dharma* to a king who was singularly devoid of it. A few days later Krishna came to Hastina. In the council hall he spoke to the



king and to Duryodhana about their unjust behaviour. Elders like Bhishma and Drona tried in vain to plead the cause of the Pandavas. Then Vidura spoke.

Vidura said: "My dear brother, evidently you do not seem to realise the grave danger that awaits you and your sons. It is obvious that you have, in your foolishness, forgotten the dreadful oath of Bhima. Bhima, with his brothers is hissing like a huge python, ready to swallow your sons. Please return the kingdom to Yudhishtira. This Krishna who is the Lord in human form has declared that the Pandavas are dear to him. The gods, therefore, will side only with the Pandavas. Can you not see that Lakshmi, the goddess of wealth will favour only the side where the Lord is present? All your past sins have taken a form and that is your son Duryodhana. The wise say that one can be abandoned for the honour of the family; the family for the sake of the village; the village for the sake of the community and the earth itself should be abandoned to save one's soul. Please abandon this Duryodhana. Listen to my advice. I am saying what is good for you."

There was a moment of silence when he said this. Just a moment. Duryodhana then descended from his seat and with

him walked Radheya, Dusshasana and Shakuni. Duryodhana came and stood very near his uncle. His eyes were red and his lips were throbbing with anger. He would not even talk to Vidura directly. He said: "Who allowed this low-born man into this council hall? He is a traitor. He has been eating the salt of my father, the king, and shamelessly he is siding with our enemies. It is our wish that he should leave this city. We do not want him here. Since he is the brother of our revered father he can escape alive."

Vidura looked at everyone and at his brother. No one spoke a word. Vidura's face was bland and calm. Only, a slight sneer could be discerned on his lips. He thought of the Lord and his mind was freed of all delusion, attachment, pain, sorrow. He took up his mighty bow and placed it on the doorstep of the great hall as if to say: "With this bow I am laying down on this doorstep the *Maya* which was clouding my vision: the affection I had for my brother and his sons; the affection which was blinding me to their real nature. It was this *Maya* which had been tying me to this place all these years and now I am able to shed it."

Vidura walked out of the assembly without once looking back.

(To be Continued)



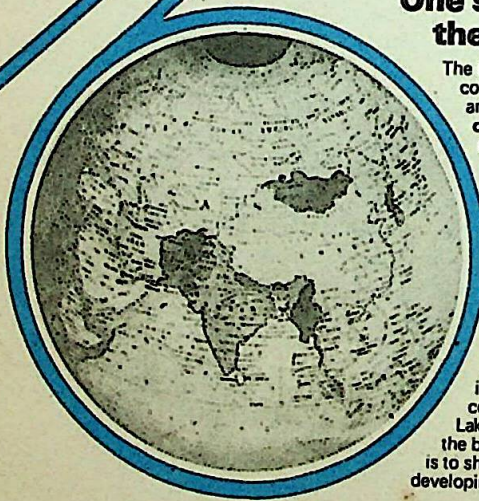


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# Yamunacharya

SWAMI RAGHAVESHANANDA

*A pompous scholar is humbled by three simple questions put by a child prodigy.*

**YAMUNA** belongs to the long line of Vaishnava Saints recognised in Southern India and generally known as Alwars. Alwar is a Tamil word which means 'he who rules the world by his love of and devotion to God.'. One of the Alwars was Nathamuni; the grandfather of Yamuna. Nathamuni had a son, Iswaramuni by name. In his youth, Iswaramuni married and enjoyed worldly happiness for some time.

A beautiful child was born to the couple. The child was named Yamuna. But ere long Iswaramuni passed away and his premature death was a great shock to his father, Nathamuni. After the death of his son he gave up the worldly life and became a Sannyasi. People conferred on him the title 'Muni,' because he used to lead as pure a life as the Munis of yore. He

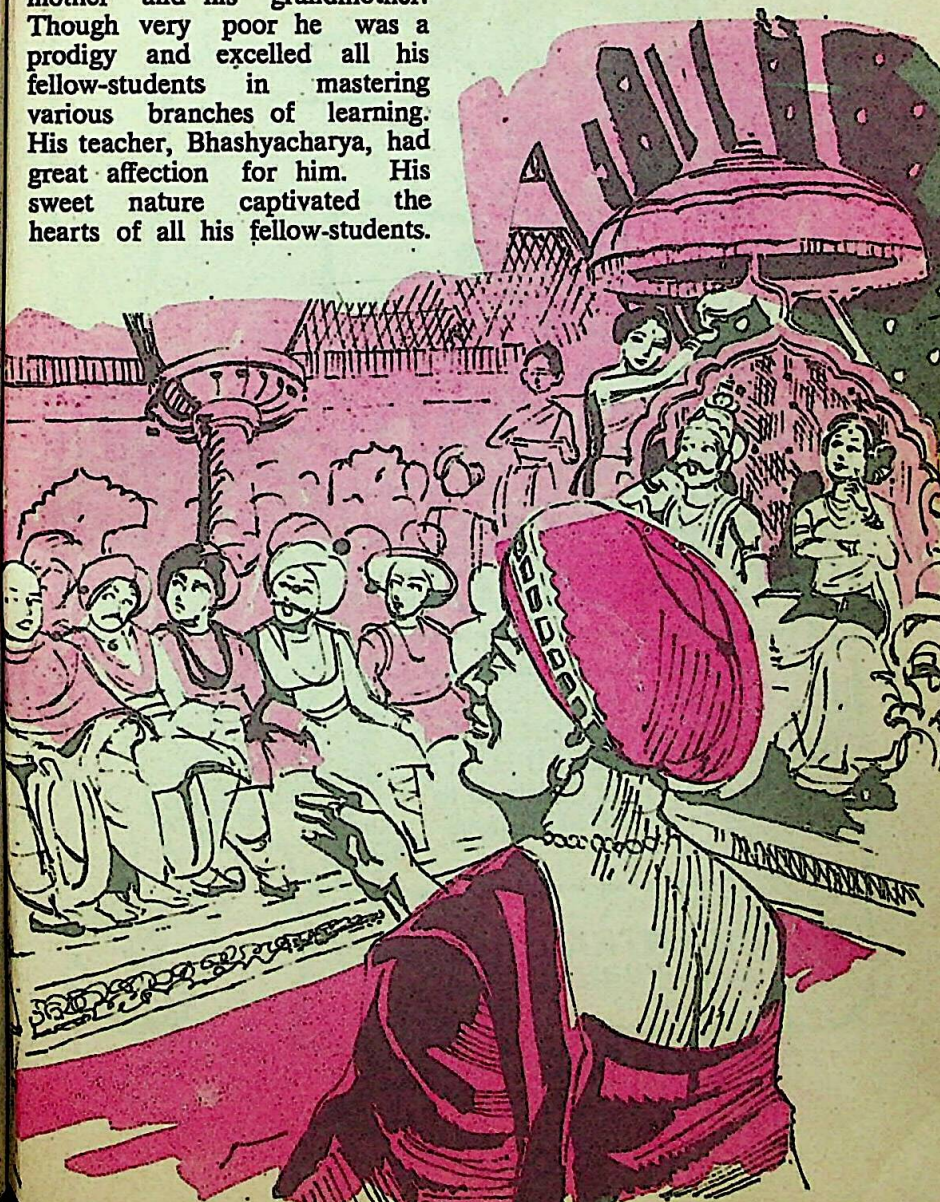
was a great scholar and he had to his credit two great books, *Nyaya Tattwa* and *Yoga*



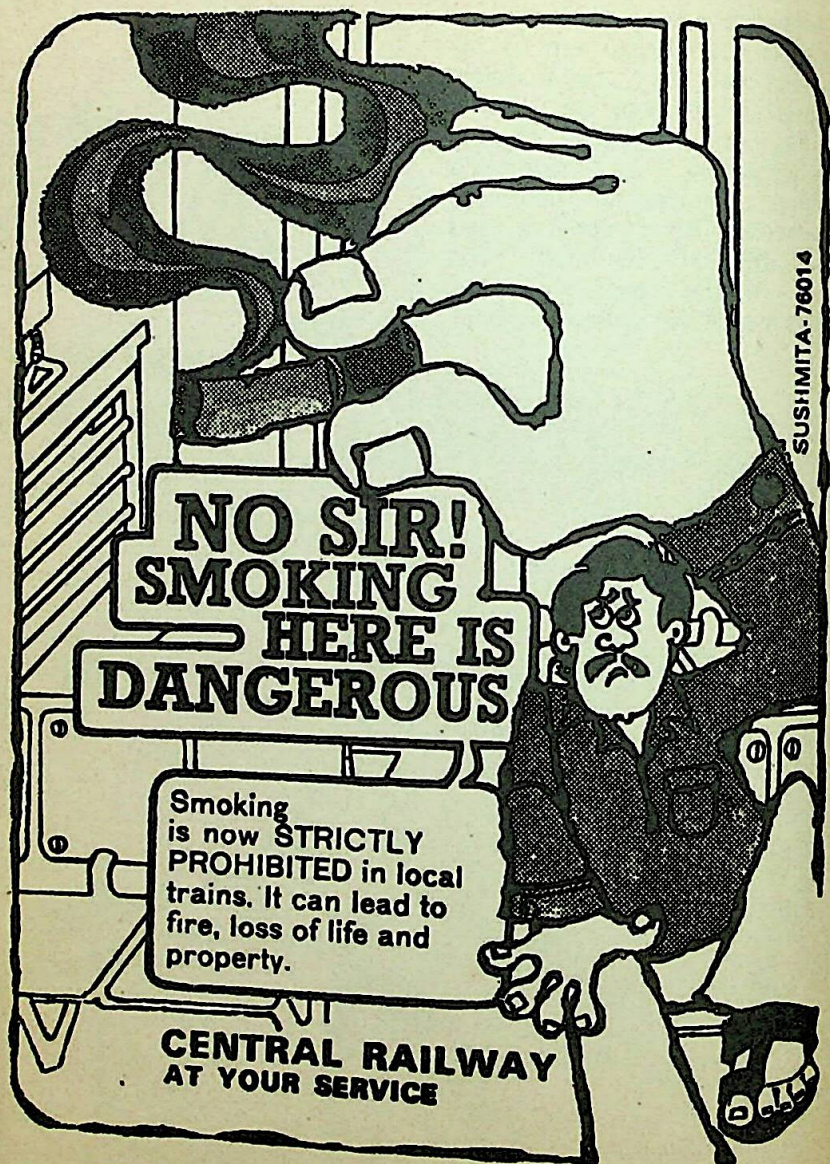


*Rahasya*, which are even today held as books of authority on Vaishnavism.

After the death of his father, Yamuna was brought up by his mother and his grandmother. Though very poor he was a prodigy and excelled all his fellow-students in mastering various branches of learning. His teacher, Bhashyacharya, had great affection for him. His sweet nature captivated the hearts of all his fellow-students.









At that time a pandit of the Pandya court was humiliating all the scholars by parading his learning. In whatever assembly he appeared, he would create a great uproar among scholars by defeating all the rivals. So he was hailed as 'Vidvajjanakolahala,'—one who causes commotion among the learned. It was the custom of the time that whoever challenged the scholarship of the court-pandit and defeated him in argument would take his place as court-pandit. But if the challenger failed to defeat him, he would be constrained to pay a big sum as an offering to the victor.

Yamuna's teacher, Bhashyacharya, had been defeated and he had to pay off the offering. One day Yamuna was sitting on a mat in his Guru's house. A messenger of the court-pandit came to collect the sum due. Bhashyacharya was then away from home. So the young Yamuna enquired of the messenger in a calm manner, "May I know, revered Sir, wherefrom you are coming?"

Kolahala's disciple replied very rudely, "Don't you know me? I am the reputed disciple of the great Vidvajjanakolahala. Even the king adores and honours my Guru. Astonished at the depth of his learning, the King keeps him in his palace and regards him verily as next to

God. By his unparalleled scholarship my Guru has established his superiority over all the learned scholars of the land. And he has made them pay offerings to him. He who fails to pay the offering is dealt with very severely. Your Guru Bhashyacharya has not paid the dues for the two or three years. Does he propose to challenge my Guru again?"

Yamuna was horrified to hear these words of arrogance and insult and said, "Fie upon you, you messenger! How stupid you are! But what else could the disciple of a stupid Guru be! By the fruit one can judge the quality of the tree. By seeing you, I can very well judge the worth of your teacher. Undoubtedly, your teacher, by not teaching you humility, has only added to the dirt of your mind instead of removing it altogether. Why should my Guru take the trouble of going to your place to defeat Kolahala? Should a lion go to scare away a fox? Go and tell your proud teacher that one of the most insignificant disciples of the venerable Bhashyacharya volunteers to argue with him. If he is bold enough to meet me in debate, let him send word to me."

On hearing this challenge, Kolahala's disciple became furious and left the place in a huff. He reported to his teacher



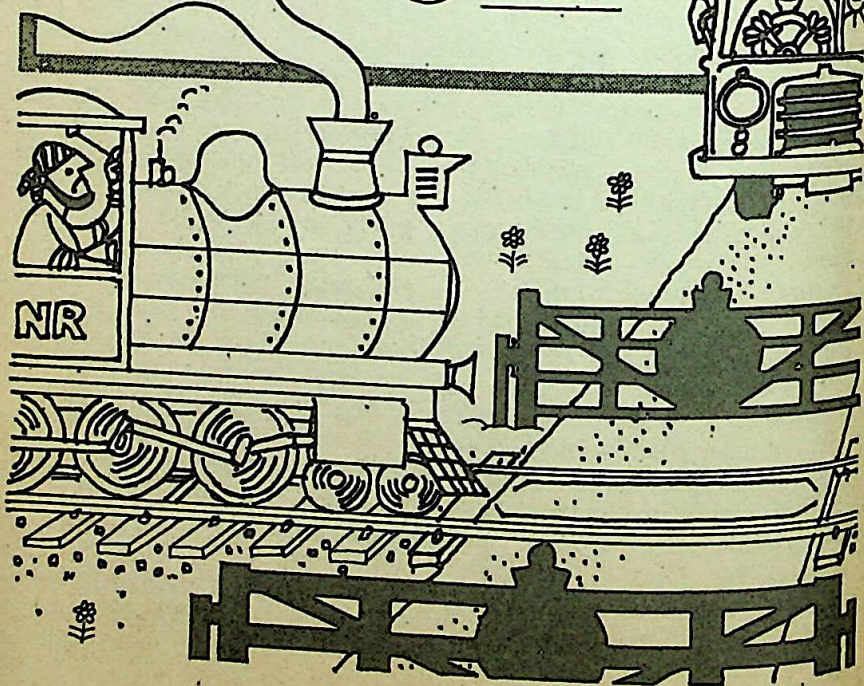


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the conversation that took place between him and Yamuna. Kolahala could not help laughing at the reported challenge of Yamuna. He wondered if a child was to be accepted as a rival at all. But he was obliged to accept a challenge from whomsoever it came. So he sent word to Yamuna, and invited him to the court. The boy demanded that he should be taken there with full honours in a palanquin, or else Kolahala should personally come and invite him to the debate.

The King and the courtiers were amazed at the audacity and obstinacy of the boy. After much discussion, it was settled that a palanquin should be sent along with a hundred men. In the meantime Bhashyacharya had returned home and had already heard about his disciple's challenge. Yamuna touched his Guru's feet and said, "There is no reason, revered Sir, for you to be alarmed. You may rest assured that by your grace, I will smash the pride of Kolahala."

The boy got into the palanquin and started for the palace.

Hearing the news of his coming, men and women assembled on both sides of the road to have a glance at the strange boy. It was an unprecedented event—this challenge by a mere boy to the most renowned of

scholars. The Brahmin pandits, who had been humiliated all along by Kolahala, wished the child well from the depth of their hearts. "Even as Vishnu dethroned and displaced Bali by assuming the form of a dwarf, so may you too return after laying low the insolent Pandit"—they said silently to the boy.

In the palace a difference of opinion arose between the King and the Queen. The Queen felt sure that the boy would be crowned victor, for she could see that he was no ordinary child. When she communicated her conviction to the King, he laughed and said, "As a cat plays with a rat, even so will our Pandit defeat and destroy the boy." But the queen replied, "Even as a single spark of fire turns a mountain of cotton into ashes, so will this little boy reduce Kolahala's mansion of pride to nothing."

The King cried out angrily to the Queen, "What would you wager in support of your faith in the puny boy?" The Queen said, "If the boy is defeated, I promise to be a slave of Your Majesty's slaves." To this the King replied, "If the boy wins, I will offer him half my kingdom."

When the royal couple were thus wrangling, Yamuna alighted from the decorated palanquin and bowed before the King.



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Kolahala looking at the boy said jestingly to the Queen, *Aal Vandaara?* (Has the foolhardy person arrived?). She replied, *Aala Vandaar*, (Yes, the boy has come to conquer you and rule the Kingdom).

To begin with, Kolahala began to put him simple questions on grammar, and found Yamuna answering them with ease; he then went on to ask difficult questions. Yamuna answered them playfully and said, "As I am a boy, you are slighting me. The great sage Ashtavakra defeated Vandi at the court of Janaka—was he then a boy or was he an old man like you? Do you judge the learning of a person by his size and his age? Then a huge bullock would indeed be a greater scholar than you are."

Though Kolahala felt insulted at these words he restrained his feelings and said: "Now you may put questions and I shall answer them."

The boy was waiting for this opportunity. He said, "All right. As you wish shall I act. I will place before you three propositions. If you are able to refute them I shall accept defeat at your hands."

"My first proposition is this—*Your mother is not a barren woman.* Refute my statement if you can."

Kolahala was confused. He

thought, "If my mother were barren, how could I have been born? But it will be a great shame if I don't refute what has been said." So not knowing what to say, he kept quiet like a dumb man. This meant he was defeated even at the first round. All the courtiers were astounded at this.

After a short pause, Yamuna, shot the second proposition. "*This Pandya King is supremely righteous.*" Again Kolahala was confused. With the King seated right in front of him, how could he say that he was not righteous? The boy would surely bring about his ruin, he feared.

Yamuna now released his third arrow, "*I say that the great queen seated in front of us is as chaste as Savitri. Please refute this.*"

This was too much for Kolahala. How could he assert that the queen was not chaste? He burst out in anger, "You mischief-monger, you have schemed to seal my lips. Can any loyal person say that the king is unrighteous or the Queen unchaste?"

"True, I am unable to refute your statements, but that does not mean that I am defeated. Now you must refute ~~your own~~ statements or else ~~rayana~~ lose your life forese leaves in King and the Queen King; It

Yamuna, bowing and his in-court, said, "I shquickened. I





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refute all my statements. Listen to me with attention and patience."

"As for my first statement, it is said in our Sastras that the woman who has given birth to only one son is to be considered barren. *"Eka putro Hya putra Lokavadat."* So Kolahala's mother who gave birth to only one son is a barren woman.

"Secondly, in the Kali Yuga, Dharma is one-footed, while Adharma is three-footed. The scriptures read, "A king who protects his subjects gets a sixth part of their religious merit and a sixth part of their sins. In the Kali Yuga, irreligion predominates. So naturally people are irreligious and the king has to take one-sixth of the people's merits and demerits. So on the authority of the scriptures it can be affirmed that the king has to bear a heavy burden of unrighteousness indeed.

"Coming to the third point, the great law-maker Manu says: The King is the veritable manifestation of Fire, Air, Sun, Moon, Yama, Kubera, Varuna and Indra. Therefore, the Queen is wedded not merely to the king alone as such, she also becomes the spouse of these eight gods. How then can it be said that she is chaste when she is wedded to as many as nine selves?"

The courtiers and the King

were speechless and were stunned and shocked at the cleverness of Yamuna. Yamuna was indeed the victor! The Pandit was vanquished and was obliged to acknowledge defeat at the hands of a child.

But the generous Yamuna forgave Kolahala. The Queen named the boy Alavandar. The King stood by his word and offered Yamuna half of his Kingdom. The boy accepted the gift and ruled as King for many years in peace and prosperity.

The news of Yamuna's becoming King reached the ears of his grandfather Nathamuni, who by then had become a great monk. He ordered his disciple, Nambi, to see to it that Yamuna did not get lost in the mire of worldly life. Accordingly Nambi made a journey to King Yamuna's palace. He sought an interview with the King. The sentries did not allow him to enter the court. To keep up his word to his Guru, he hit upon a plan. There is a type of greens called 'Thudavalai'—it is sweet to taste and has a pleasant flavour. He collected some of those greens and approached the chief cook of the palace kitchen. He said, "Dear brother, May the Lord Narayana bless you, kindly use these leaves in cooking food for the King; It will lengthen his life and his intelligence will be quickened. I



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shall get you thsee greens every day."

The cook was himself a pious man, and had heard of the rare virtues of these greens. He accepted them and promised to serve them to the King every day. For about a couple of months, Nambi supplied them these greens regularly and Yamuna took these preparations with great relish.

Nambi found that the King relished the greens greatly. Nambi deliberately withheld the supply one day. The King noticed the absence of the greens. He asked the cook about it. The cook tremblingly replied, "There is a Sadhu who supplies these greens every day. But unfortunately today he has not turned up. I do not know the name and the whereabouts of this Sadhu. He does not accept any payment for this supply. Out of love and regard for you he gets the greens from somewhere and brings them here every day."

The King grew thoughtful and instructed the cook to bring the Sadhu (Nambi) when he turned up next.

The following day Nambi came as usual and was summoned before the King. The King was overjoyed to meet the Sadhu. Then Nambi said, "Your Majesty, I am a disciple of your grandfather Nathamuni. Before he breathed his last he

left with me an immense treasure to be handed over to you. Please accept the treasure and relieve me."

Yamuna was very glad to hear of the treasure and resolved to follow Nambi. But Nambi said, "You must follow me, and follow me alone."

Yamuna readily agreed and left his kingdom to follow Nambi. As he associated closely with Nambi, he came to admire his greatness, his love for God, his purity of conduct, and above all the peace and joy that glowed in his countenance. And here arose in the heart of king Yamuna a longing for God and a passion to attain peace. He lost all taste for the enjoyments of the world. Even the desire to rule the kingdom faded. Nambi and Yamuna retired to the temple of Sri Ranganatha where Yamuna became a monk and teacher.

In his later years he wrote four famous books on Visistadvaita. He wanted to write a commentary on the Brahmasutras. But he passed away before this desire was fulfilled. It was left to his great disciple Ramanuja to carry out this desire.

Even when overpowered by illness, he never for a moment stopped chanting the glories of Narayana.

Till the last moment of his life



on earth Yamuna preached untiringly. Many questions were put to him. One questioner asked, "Revered Sir, Narayana is beyond mind and speech. How should then one serve Him?"

The great Yamuna replied, "One serves the Lord by serving His devotees. The devotee of God is beyond caste and race. He is the visible image of the Lord. After offering the ego at His lotus feet as a sacrifice, be free of all care. Adopt the attitude, 'I am His servant.' When this attitude is firmly established in the mind, one gets rid of the ego. Then only a man can understand that he is not subject to the cycle of birth and death, and is the eternal servant of Narayana."

His end was fast approaching. On the last day he called his disciples and said, "My last piece of advice to you is this: You should offer flowers at the lotus feet of the Lord and follow the instructions of your Guru. You should attain the goal of life by destroying the ego through the service of the devotees."

Yamuna Muni sat in the lotus posture. Withdrawing the mind he concentrated it on his heart. The disciples were singing the glories of the Lord. Tears of joy rolled down his cheeks. At last, by giving up the slough of

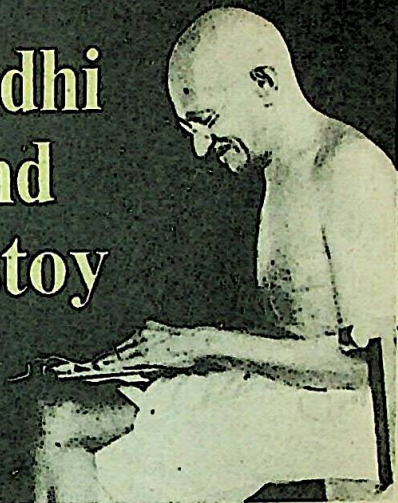
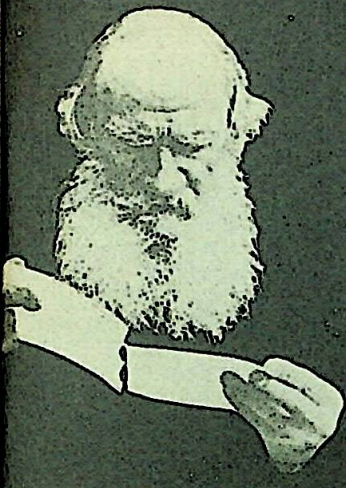
the body and freeing the *prana* through the aperture at the crown of the head, he got dissolved in the supreme Brahman. The disciples marvelled at this. With heavy hearts they took the body and washed it in cool water and fresh clothes were put on it before it was placed on a decorated bier. Then all marched in slow pace carrying the body towards a spot on the banks of the river Kaveri.

Sri Yamuna's last wish was to install Ramanuja as the spiritual head to succeed him. He had his disciple Mahapurna to bring Ramanuja from Kanchipuram. But Alas! Yamuna-charya breathed his last before meeting his beloved Ramanuja.

Ramanuja bowed down before the body of Yamuna. He observed three fingers in Yamuna's right hand being kept bent and closed in. Ramanuja learned from the disciples that Yamuna had left three behests for him. The first was to write a *Bhashya* for the *Brahmasutra*. The second was to popularise the *Divyaprabandham*. The third was to organise the band of worthy disciples to propagate Vaishnavism. Ramanuja took a solemn vow to carry out the three behests. How well he did all these is history now.



# Gandhi and Tolstoy



THIS year, the world celebrates the 150th birth anniversary of Leo Tolstoy, one of the strongest moral forces that the world's literary history has ever produced. Anton Chekov, another literary genius from Russia, wrote in 1899, when Tolstoy was critically ill: "While he lives, bad taste in literature, every vulgarity, insolent or tearful, all crude and exasperating ambitions, will be kept at a distance, deep in a shadow." Larvin described Tolstoy as "the conscience of his age."

It is a well-known fact of history that Gandhiji was greatly influenced by three Western thinkers and writers: Thoreau, Ruskin and Tolstoy. While in South Africa, he came across Tolstoy's "The Kingdom of God is within you." He was totally captured by the beauty of Tolstoy's philosophy. He immediately wrote to Tolstoy as his "humble follower." A correspondence ensued between these two great men.

We give below extracts from this historical correspondence.

—Editor

## The first letter from Gandhi to Tolstoy:

Westminster Palace Hotel,  
4, Victoria Street, London, S.W.

1st October, 1909.

Sir,

I take the liberty of inviting your attention to what has been going on in the Transvaal (South Africa) for nearly three years.

"There is in that colony a British Indian population of nearly 13,000. These Indians have for several years laboured under the various legal disabilities. The prejudice against colour and in some respects against Asiatics is intense in that colony. It is largely due, so far as Asiatics are concerned, to trade jealousy. The



# Gandhi and Tolstoy

climax was reached three years ago, with a law which I and many others considered to be degrading and calculated to unman those to whom it was applicable. I felt that submission to law of this nature was inconsistent with the spirit of true religion.

I and some of my friends were and still are firm believers in the doctrine of non-resistance to evil. I had the privilege of studying your writings also, which left a deep impression on my mind. British Indians, before whom the position was fully explained, accepted the advice that we should not submit to the legislation, but that we should suffer imprisonment, or whatever other penalties the law may impose for its breach. The result has been that nearly one half of the Indian population, that was unable to stand the heat of the struggle, to suffer the hardships of imprisonment, have withdrawn from the Transvaal rather than submit to law which they have considered degrading.

Of the other half, nearly 2,500 have for conscience's sake allowed themselves to be imprisoned, some as many as five times. The imprisonments have varied from four days to six months; in the majority of cases with hard labour. Many have been financially ruined. At present there are over hundred passive resisters in the Transvaal gaols. Some of these have been very poor men, earning their livelihood from day to day. The result has been that their wives and children have had to be supported out of public contributions, also largely raised from passive resisters.

This has put a severe strain upon British Indians, but in my opinion they have risen to the occasion. The struggle still continues and one does not know when the end will come. This, however, some of us at least have seen most clearly, that passive resistance will and can succeed where brute force must fail.....

Together with a friend, I have come here to see the imperial authorities and to place before them the position, with a view to seeking redress. Passive resisters have recognised that they should have nothing to do with pleading with the Government, but the deputation has come at the instance of the weaker members of the community, and it therefore represents their weakness rather than their strength.....

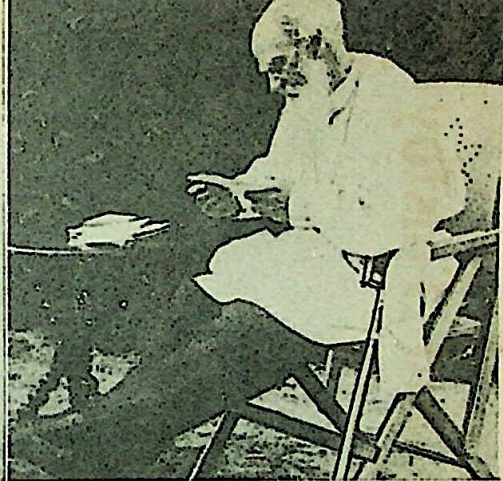
There is one thing more, with reference to which I would trespass upon your time. A copy of your letter addressed to a Hindu on the present unrest in India has been placed in my hands by a friend. On the face of it, it appears to represent your views. It is the intention of my friend, at his own expense, to have 20,000 copies printed and distributed and to have it translated also. We have, however, not been able to secure the original, and we do not feel justified in printing it, unless we are sure of the accuracy of the copy and of the fact that it is your letter. I venture to enclose herewith a copy of the copy, and should esteem it a favour if you kindly let me know whether it is your letter, whether it is an accurate copy and whether you approve of its publication in the above manner. If you will add anything further to the letter please do so.

I would also venture to make a suggestion. In the concluding





**Tolstoy in 1868**



**Going through mail, 1910.**

ing paragraph you seem to dissuade the reader from a belief in reincarnation. I do not know whether (if it is not impertinent on my part to mention this) you have specially studied the question. Reincarnation or transmigration is a cherished belief with millions in India, indeed in China also. With many one might almost say it is a matter of experience, no longer a matter of academic acceptance. It explains reasonably the many mysteries of life. With some of the passive resisters who have gone through the gaols of the Transvaal, it has been their solace. My object in writing this is not to convince you of the truth of the doctrine, but to ask you if you will please remove the word "reincarnation" from the other things you have dissuaded your reader from. In the letter in question you have quoted largely from Krishna and given reference to passages. I should thank you to give me the title of the book from which the quotations have been made."

I have wearied you with this letter. I am aware that those who honour you and endeavour to follow you have no right to trespass upon your time, but it is rather their duty to refrain from giving you trouble, so far as possible. I have; however, who am an utter stranger to you, taken the liberty of addressing this communication in the interests of truth, and in order to have your advice on problems, the solution of which you have made your life work.

With respects, I remain,  
Your obedient servant,  
M.K. Gandhi.

**When he was 25, Tolstoy wrote:**

**"That man whose purpose is his own happiness is bad; he whose purpose is the opinion of others is meek, he whose purpose is the happiness of others is virtuous, he whose purpose is God, is great."**



## HOW THE FRIENDSHIP STARTED

In South Africa, one Mr. Coates, a quaker, who believed in total abolition of war, was a friend of Gandhiji. He gave Tolstoy's "Kingdom of God Is Within You" to Gandhiji, who wrote that the book "overwhelmed

me. It left an abiding impression on me. Before the independent thinking, profound morality, and the truthfulness of this book, all books given me by Mr. Coates seemed to pale into insignificance."

Gandhi and Tolstoy

M. K. Gandhi  
Transvaal

Yasnaya Polyana  
Oct. 7, 1909.

Just now I have received your very interesting letter, which gives me great pleasure. May God help all our dear brothers and co-workers in the Transvaal. This fight between gentleness and brutality and between humility and love on one side, and conceit and violence on the other, makes itself ever more strongly felt here to us also—especially in the sharp conflicts between religious obligations and the laws of the State—expressed by the conscientious objection to render military service. Such objections are taking place very frequently.

I have written a letter to a Hindu and am very pleased to have it translated (into English). The title of the book on Krishna will be communicated to you from Moscow. As regards 're-birth' I, for my part, shall leave out nothing; for, as it appears to me, the belief in a re-birth will never be able to strike such deep roots in and restrain mankind as the belief in the immortality of the soul and the faith in divine truth and love; of course I would accommodate you, if you so desire, to delete those passages in question. It will give me great pleasure to help your edition. Publication and circulation of my writings, translated into Indian dialects, can only be a matter of pleasure to me.

The question regarding monetary payment of Royalty should not at all be allowed to appear in religious undertakings.

I give my fraternal greetings and am glad to have come into personal contact with you.

LEO TOLSTOY

21-24, Court Chambers,  
Johannesburg.  
15th August, 1910.

M. K. GANDHI,  
Attorney.  
TO COUNT LEO TOLSTOY.

Dear Sir,

I am much obliged to you for your encouraging and cordial letter of the 8th May last.....

Mr. Kallenbach has written to you about Tolstoy Farm. Mr. Kallenbach and I have been friends for many years. I may state



that he has gone through most of the experiences that you so graphically described in your work *My Confession*. No writing has so deeply touched Mr. Kallenbach as yours; and, as a spur to further effort in living up to the ideals held before the world by you, he has taken the liberty, after consultation with me, of naming his farm after you.

Of his generous action in giving the use of the farm for passive resisters, the numbers of *Indian Opinion* I am sending herewith will give you full information.

I should not have burdened you with these details but for the fact of your taking a personal interest in the passive resistance struggle that is going on in the Transvaal.

I remain,  
Your faithful servant,  
M. K. GANDHI.

To  
M. K. GANDHI,  
Johannesburg,  
Transvaal, South Africa.

"KOTCHETY."  
(Castle of the eldest daughter of Tolstoy).  
7th September, 1910.

I have received your journal *Indian Opinion* and I am happy to know all that is written on non-resistance. I wish to communicate to you the thoughts which are aroused in me by the reading of those articles.

The more I live—and specially now that I am approaching death, the more I feel inclined to express to others the feelings which so strongly move my being, and which, according to my opinion, are of great importance. That is, what one calls non-resistance, is in reality nothing else but the discipline of love undeformed by false interpretation. Love is the aspiration for communion and solidarity with other souls, and that aspiration always liberates the source of noble activities. That love is the supreme and unique law of human life, which everyone feels in the depth of one's soul. We find it manifested most clearly in the soul of the infants. Man feels it so long as he is not blinded by the false doctrines of the world.

That law of love has been promulgated by all the philosophies—Indian, Chinese, Hebrew, Greek and Roman. I think that it had been most clearly expressed by Christ, who said that in that law is contained both the law and the Prophets.....

If the law of love cannot exist, there remains no other law except that of violence, that is the right of the mighty. It was thus that the Christian Society has lived during these nineteen centuries. It is a fact that all the time people were following only violence in the organisation of Society. But the difference between the ideals of Christian peoples and that of other nations lies only

Gandhi and Tolstoy



in this: that, in Christianity the law of love had been expressed so clearly and definitely as has never been expressed in any other religious doctrine; that the Christian world had solemnly accepted that law, although at the same time it had permitted the employment of violence and on that violence it had constructed their whole life. Consequently, the life of the Christian peoples is an absolute contradiction between their profession and the basis of their life; contradiction between love recognised as the law of life, and violence recognised as inevitable in different departments of life; like Governments, Tribunals, Army, etc. which are recognised and praised. That contradiction developed with the inner development of the Christian world and has attained its paroxysm in recent days.....

Between the confession of Christianity, even under the perverted form in which it appears amongst us Christian peoples, and the simultaneous recognition of the necessity of armies and of the preparation for killing on an ever-increasing scale, there exists a contradiction so flagrant and crying that sooner or later, probably very soon, it must invariably manifest itself in utter nakedness; and it will lead us either to renounce the Christian religion, and to maintain the governmental power or to renounce the existence of the army and all the forms of violence which the state supports and which are more or less necessary to sustain its power. That contradiction is felt by all the governments, by your British Government as well as by our Russian Government; and therefore, by the spirit of conservatism natural to these governments, the opposition is persecuted, as we find in Russia as well as in the articles of your journal, more than any other anti-governmental activity. The governments know from which direction comes the principal danger and try to defend themselves with a great zeal in that trial not merely to preserve their interests but actually to fight for their very existence.

With my perfect esteem,

LEO TOLSTOY

"The growing criminalities, unemployment, and absurd bureaucracies of the rich, augmented without limit, and the awful misery of the poor, the terribly increasing number of suicides—all these are the signs of that inner contradiction, which must be there and which cannot be resolved; and without doubt can only be resolved by acceptance of the law of Love and by the rejection of all sorts of violence.

"Consequently, your work in Transvaal, which seems to be far away from the centre of our world, is yet the most fundamental and most important to us supplying the most weighty practical proof in which the world can now share, and with which must participate not only the Christians, but all the people of the world."

—From a letter to Gandhiji  
from Tolstoy.





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# What The Bhavan Stands For

DR. P. B. GAJENDRAGADKAR



THE "Bhavan's Journal" is running its Silver Jubilee year. As in the case of an individual, so in the case of a Journal, 25 years is a fairly long period and it furnishes an occasion for looking back and looking ahead. I am honestly satisfied that during this year when the Journal looks back, it should look back with pride and when it looks forward, it should look forward with a prayerful mood that in future it should continue its work as in the last quarter and should be worthy as of its past.

The Journal in my view has played a major role in achieving one of the main objectives which Munshiji had in mind in founding the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan and it is my hope that what Munshiji said when the Journal was started would turn out to be a prophecy. Said Munshiji:

"Bharat has a heritage and a mission in history. It should be the privilege of this Journal to interpret this heritage and be the instrument of its mission."

Munshiji said this in the first

number of the Journal issued on 15th August 1954.

Whilst the Journal is living through its Silver Jubilee, inevitably it is bound to recall the memory of the great father of the Bhavan. Munshiji was a brilliant lawyer, a great debator, a dedicated patriot, a profound constitutional lawyer, a constructive statesman, a politician and an effective administrator, a scholar and writer in Gujarati, whose writings began a new era in the history of Gujarati literature. A combination of so many outstanding merits would make a person's name almost immortal. But as a result of the lengthening shadow of time, the names of even the most brilliant men become matters of history for future generations and are apt to lose some of the glamour. This has happened to Gandhiji and Jawaharlal Nehru and Munshiji may not be an exception to this rule. But this general rule will not apply to Munshiji, the father of the Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan. The Bhavan as an institution has now become a part



**THE BHAVAN** as an institution has now become a part of India's life and it is my faith that so long as the Indian culture, civilization, religion and ethics survive—so long the glory of Munshiji's name will remain as brilliant as ever.

of India's life and it is my faith that so long as the Indian culture, civilization, religion and ethics survive—so long the glory of Munshiji's name will remain as brilliant as ever.

In one sense, the Bhavan occupies in the cultural life of India, the position which Ramakrishna Mission does in the religious and spiritual life of our country.

In founding the Bhavan, Munshiji showed remarkable imagination and extraordinary vision and he wanted the Bhavan to be an instrument of India's renaissance in cultural, social, economic, historical, political, literary and, above all in religious and ethical matters. As Munshiji would in his usual modest way have preferred to say, not that he founded the Bhavan but that God chose him as a humble that God chose him behalf.

The Bhavan began its career in 1938, in a one-room tenement in a City College and its financial resources constituted of the monthly contributions of Rs. 250/- each made by Munshiji and three of his friends. It is from that small unpretentious modest

room that the Bhavan began its work which has assumed such gigantic proportions.

As a result of Munshiji's dynamism and imagination and great ability to carry all intellectuals with him, the Bhavan soon expanded and its activities increased manifold. It started and established

educational institutions and began to send its message to the whole country as per the saying: *Utthistata, Jagarata, Prapyavaran Nibodhata*—Awake, Arise and

Stop not till the Goal is reached.

In 'course of time the Bhavan shifted to its present magnificent building in the centre of the city. This building has been continuously and unceasingly humming with activities of a constructive type all the year round. In fact it is the centre of India's cultural, religious, ethical and philosophical message, which goes not only to all the corners of this country but—it would be no exaggeration to say—to all the corners of the world today.

On July 19, the Bhavan had the unique honour of having the new building of its London Centre, which was started in





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1972, inaugurated by the Rt. Hon'ble Mr. James Callaghan, British Prime Minister. It is as magnificent as the central building of the Bhavan. In his speech, the British Prime Minister was full of appreciation for the work which the Bhavan has done and expressed great admiration for the message Munshiji gave to the world through the activities of the Bhavan.

A large number of distinguished people in British public life participated, amongst whom were Lord Mountbatten, Lord Macmillan and several others. The British High Commissioner in India made it convenient to be present on the occasion and participated in the function. India's High Commissioner and almost the entire Indian community in London attended the function. The work of the Bhavan and its manifold activities were lauded by several speakers and the whole atmosphere was surcharged with so much enthusiasm that everyone must have felt the presence of Munshiji's spirit in the hall.

As usual with the Bhavan this function was also organised with great imagination and meticulous care and the whole programme was gone through with precision, which drew appreciative remarks from those present, including the Rt. Hon. Harold Macmillan. Indeed the British

Prime Minister, and Lord Mountbatten felt so much impressed by the several items of work constructive and creative in character that they stayed on for nearly an hour and half in the premises after the function.

I am sure that Shri S. Ramakrishnan, who always prefers to remain in the background, had a lot to do with the success of this function in his own quiet manner.

I believe that in the near future, the Bhavan will be able to open a centre on the same magnificent scale in New York and then literally it will become an international organization.

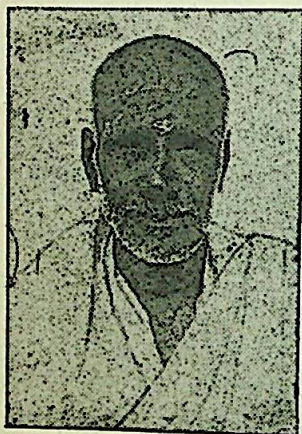
The popularity of the activities of the Bhavan speaks for the fact that humanity today is hungry to receive the message of spiritual and ethical significance which "Bhavan's Journal" conveys to its readers from fortnight to fortnight. It will be surprising to many people to realise that though the "Bhavan's Journal" does not believe in self-advertisement and though it deals with subjects other than those which are superficially popular for the ordinary mind, its readership is authenticated to be seven lakhs. You take any number of the Journal issued during the last 25 years including the Silver Jubilee Number and you will find a galaxy of scholars from all countries, all races, all



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(of Kottamarudhar)

**SRI MAHALAKSHMI JYOTISHA OFFICE**  
Arakandanallur, Tamil Nadu - 605 752



castes and creeds discussing subjects which ultimately matter in human life and expressing their views freely, fully, fearlessly and in a spirit of tolerance and understanding. There is no branch of human knowledge which matters for the progress of the humanity, to which the Bhavan does not make contribution and be it said to the credit of the Journal that it attracts the best thinkers and readers from all over the world. It is a literally cosmopolitan world Journal which is fulfilling the important mission which Munshiji had in mind. Truly, as has been said, from small streamlets mighty rivers grow, with surprising speed and rapidity, both the Bhavan and its Journal have grown from strength to strength fulfilling the mission of sustaining India's renaissance which was so dear to Munshiji's heart. In this Silver Jubilee year, naturally and inevitably, the Bhavan bows in respect and pays its homage to the memory of its father, Munshiji.

What does the Journal stand for? It stands for the propagation of the basic Hindu philosophy that life must be engaged on a quest of Truth and that is the Truth all human beings seek for. It must be a guide, philosopher and friend not only of

their individual life but the life of the community as a whole and indeed of the life of the world.

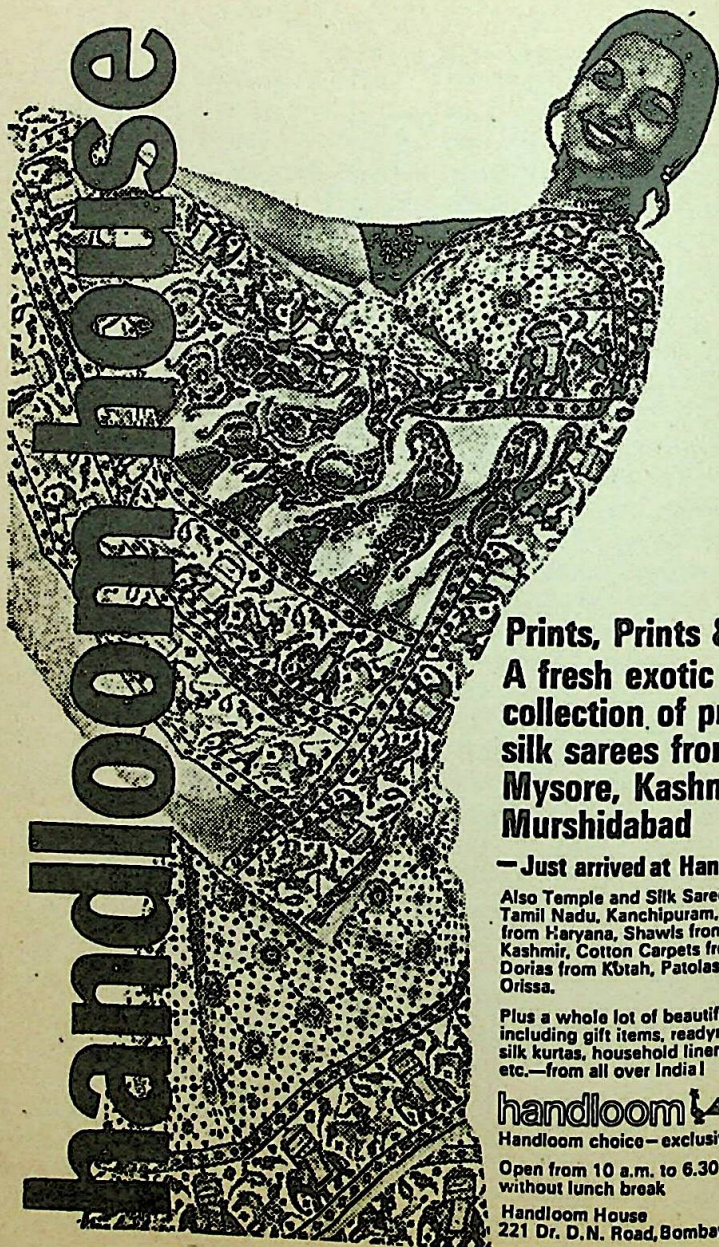
*Rita and Satya*—Ethical Truth and Material Truth—are the two Truths on the quest of which Hindu religion has been engaged for nearly 5000 years. Let us not forget that the Hindu religion and Hindu Philosophy have the most ancient pedigree in the whole of the world.

The *Rig Veda* which is universally recognised as the founda-



tion of Hinduism was composed, on the most estimate, in above 2000B.C. and it must be remembered when I say that the *Rig Veda* was composed in the year 25000 B.C. it is not as if the whole *Rig Veda* was composed then. When the Aryans came to India from their original home, they brought with them the original *Rig Veda* and additions were made to it by generations. It is a remarkable tribute to our ancestors that though the art of writing was not then known, the whole *Vedanta* literature consisting of four *Vedas*, *Brahmanas*, *Aranyakas* and the *Upanishads* were kept alive by the human lip and they were continued from generation to generation with such accuracy that you rarely get any variations in any texts which are now printed.





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I have already said that Hinduism has been from times immemorial engaged in the search of Truth—Ethical and Material. Hinduism, according to the world famous historian and philosopher Toynbee, does not claim any monopoly of Truth—a unique feature of this religion—and that explains the motto of the Journal.

The motto says: *Aano Badrah : Kratavo Yantu Viswaha* : Let noble thoughts come to us from every side (Rig Veda I-89-i).

This knowledge that Hinduism has no monopoly of the ultimate ethical and religious truth naturally introduces an element of genuine humility of mind in the seeker of the truth. Ever since Hinduism began its journey of its quest of this double truth, it has never been afraid of any ideas. It does not believe in any dogmas; it does not believe in any absolutes; therefore it is *Abhaya*, without fear of ideas and it is prepared to discuss all ideas which are reasonably logical.

One inevitable significance of this humble approach is that Hinduism has never degenerated into a dogma and has never treated any person as a heretic. Even Charwak was a Hindu. Hinduism did not treat Charwak as outside its frame.

The "Bhavan's Journal" by its

various writings contributed by intellectuals from all over the world belonging to all religions, races, castes and creeds preaches this message. It tells its readers, and through its readers the world at large, that fantastic material and scientific progress must be accompanied by—and indeed guided and controlled by—ethics. Ethical progress and material progress must go hand in hand. If physical sciences make their progress in a breath-taking manner, as they are at present, without the guidance and control of ethical considerations, humanity may face disaster.

The "Bhavan's Journal" constitutes a unique type in that it does not cater to the desire of normal persons to read about sensational topics, and you should merely compare the contents of any number of this Journal with the contents of other popular Journals to realise what a strong, deep, idealistic contrast there is between the two. And yet, the Journal is very popular and commands such a large readership as seven lakhs. This proves that at heart human race is still sound and wants to be guided and educated on proper line.

Petty quarrels between communities in India and bigger quarrels between nations which seem to take the nations to the



**CHHAGA**  
the sure-  
carrier of  
the fire-god

"Your wool is the  
giving warmth. You  
eat all vegetation; you  
reach inaccessible heights;  
you endure all climates.  
You are the sure-  
carrier of the fire-god  
to our homes!"





ooted

## god Agni

ode of fire,  
fire, you consume  
limb even to  
with ease; and  
les. O Chhaga,  
d Agni, protect

The goat, Chhaga, is the vehicle of the fire-god Agni. A sturdy animal, he romps and frolics on the plains. With equal ease, he leaps to great heights, climbing sure-footed along craggy mountain tops, just as the flames of fire leap up ever higher.

Chhaga, also called Aja or Immortal, is the sacrificial animal in the Yajnas, the holy rites in which Agni plays an important part. Chhaga is said to be a link between the two worlds, just as Agni is a messenger of the gods and a mediator between gods and men. Oblations offered to Agni are said to reach all the gods. Besides being the originator of the sacrificial fire, Agni warms and protects people in the form of the fire in their hearths. Similarly, Chhaga's warm wool offers protection in winter.

Agni also represents the vital spark, the element of Life in man, beast and plant. Fire purifies all it consumes, reducing everything to its primary elements, ready

for re-creation. Agni is therefore Purity, cleansing the world of evil, and he rides appropriately on Chhaga who symbolises Immortality.

The Sanskrit word 'vahana' or vehicle is used for the animals, birds and men who serve as the carriers of the gods in Hindu mythology. They are worshipped along with their presiding deities by people from all over the country. Their idols and pictures are placed in shrines and their living counterparts are provided a sanctified existence.

Accepted as a part of our cultural heritage since ancient times, the vahanas have helped create a sympathetic understanding of the animal world. Their selfless service, devotion to duty, all the ideals they stood for, have inspired our people through the ages. These have also been the inspiration behind the evolution of the operating philosophy of the Mafatlal Group, embedded in its policies and projected through the activities of its diversified operations.



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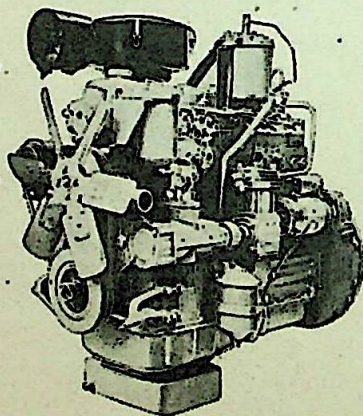
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threshold of disaster can be avoided if the twin message of Hinduism is brought home to them. If only all the nations realise that while material progress is essential for the happiness of the human race, it is not an end in itself and it must always be accompanied and effectively controlled and governed by the ethical considerations. And ethics to which I am referring are of universal character. They are not parochial, they are not confined to any particular religion, caste or creed. They seek to enunciate the propositions which ennoble the human souls and dare as such universal in character.

When the Journal often speaks of unity beneath diversity and of the unity of the human races of the world, as one family, it speaks for these principles as matters of fundamental importance to the human race. That is the message which Munshiji wanted the Journal to carry to the mankind. And that is the message the Journal has been giving lakhs of its readers from fortnight to fortnight for the last 25 years. That is why I began my tribute by saying that in the Silver Jubilee year the "Bhavan's Journal" should look back on its past with pride.

Along with the Journal, indeed two years before the Journal was started, Munshiji

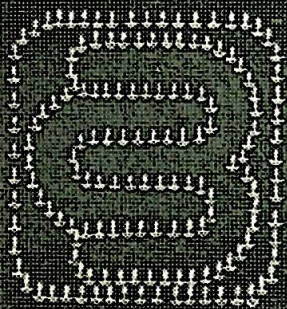
thought of a Book University. That again was an act of vision. The idea originally was to publish about 100 books in English and books in all languages conveying to all Indians the message of Hinduism and Hindu culture, and helping Indian renaissance.

The Book University wanted to assist the programme of Indian renaissance by approaching learned scholars to contribute on all subjects of importance, historical, economic, political, religious, ethical and spiritual. The target of 100 books which was modestly fixed by Munshiji has been exceeded long ago and the books published by the Book University have become very large in numbers as over 600 and are so popular that some of them have undergone several editions. Indeed now these books do deserve to be described as the Book University.

It sometimes seems to me that whatever the hands of the father of the Bhavan touched became gold. The progress of the Bhavan, progress of the Journal and the progress of the Book University supports my belief.

As Sri Ramakrishna Paramahansa and Swami Vivekananda revolutionised the Hindu life—one by being an example and the other by his eloquent words and spiritual life—so has the Bhavan attempted successfully to revo-





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lutionise the cultural life of the country.

The Bhavan has a very bright future before it and all its activities are bound to grow from strength to strength. Therefore in the Silver Jubilee year, while the Journal is justified in looking with pride on its past, it can prayerfully hope that the future would be worthy of its past.

Even after Munshiji's departure, the activities of the Bhavan have not only not decreased but have expanded manifold and they have crossed the ocean and reached the U.K. and so may reach USA. This remarkable feature is due to the fact that Munshiji had a great capacity to invoke the best in his friends who believe genuinely in the importance of his work and after his death have kept the flag flying. Such big institutions require the help of several people—intellectuals, writers and even devoted staff. All these the Bhavan can legitimately claim and above all such a big institution requires a dynamic, effective but unambitious persons to organize and co-ordinate its affairs which are increasing in geometrical progression. Munshiji trained one such man throughout his life who worked under him as a

loyal disciple and who is now working silently and avoiding publicity, organizing the affairs with great care, and punctiliousness and that is Shri S. Ramakrishnan.

What is the ideal of all the activities of the Bhavan? This can best be summed up in the ancient words of *Rig Veda*:

समानी व आकूतिः  
समाना हृदयानि वः ।  
समानमस्तु वो मनः  
यथा वः सुसहाति  
यथा वः सुसहाति ।

Rig. 10 191

*O Brethren!*

*May your aims be one;*

*May your hearts be the same;*

*May your thoughts be identical—*

*So that perfect harmony prevail amongst you.*

On this solemn occasion, in all humility I offer my greetings to the Bhavan, the Journal and its manifold activities and pay my respectful homage to the memory of Bhavan's great father.

□ □ □

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## MEMORIES OF VALLATHOL

K. P. S. MENON

The birth centenary of Vallathol Narayana Menon, Kerala's premier poet, is being celebrated now.

The Posts and Telegraphs Department brought out a special stamp in honour of Vallathol on October 15.

Shri K.P.S. Menon is the Chairman of the Reception Committee which has been formed to organise the Vallathol Centenary Celebrations.

In this article Shri Menon recalls his sweet memories about the great poet, People's Poet.—Ed.

**VALLATHOL** shares with Mahatma Gandhi the title of *Maha* or Great. One is called Mahatma, the Great Soul; and the other Mahakavi, the Great Poet. Yet neither relished the title. "Often, the title has pained me," said Gandhiji, "and there is not a moment when it has not tickled me." Words which Vallathol himself might have used.

Vallathol was the sweetest human being I have come across. His sweetness flowed from his heart, pure as gold, free from the slightest trace of envy or rancour, full of understanding and sympathy for his fellowmen

and always ready to share their joys and sorrows. It is this quality which made Vallathol the sweetest of companions.

Strangely enough, his deafness, an infirmity which struck him when he was barely 40, only added to his sweetness. He never allowed himself to be weighed down by it. His *Lament of the Deaf* begins as a lament and ends with an assertion of his fortitude and his faith in God. His deafness was no bar to social intercourse: in fact it made his other senses even sharper. It might also have enabled him to remain securely in the realm of fancy, free from the distract-



ing noises of the madding world.

Not that Vallathol held the world in contempt or regarded human beings with disdain. This world was at once real and beautiful to him; compared to it, the other world was a question mark. "It may be," he once said with characteristic humour, "that after death we may go to heaven, but what guarantee is there that there will be Kathakali in heaven?"

Vallathol was no politician, but he adored Mahatma Gandhi. It was at the Vaikom Satyagraha that Vallathol met Gandhiji first. Gandhiji asked him whether he had taken to spinning. He said no.

"Why not?," asked Gandhiji.

"Because a poet lives in a world of his own, the world of imagination. Not for him manual work. It is through his writings that he influences the people."

"Tagore said so to me, too," said Gandhiji gently. "Do you believe in khadi?" asked Gandhiji.

"Not only in khadi, but in everyone of your teachings," said Vallathol. And Vallathol's poem, *Bapuji*, dealing with the last hours of Mahatma Gandhi and his funeral, is excruciating in its pathos.

Candour was one of Vallathol's striking characteristics. He indulged in plain speaking, when plain speaking was called for. A girl, who showed great promise as a poet, stopped writing poetry soon after she got married. "It is as if her husband thought that

poetry would be fatal to her chastity!" exclaimed Vallathol.

Once, he approached a rich landlord for a contribution towards the establishment of Kalamandalam for promoting Kathakali. "My one prayer is that Kathakali may disappear from the face of earth," said the landlord. "You might as well pray that Kerala should disappear from the face of the earth," said Vallathol and he walked out.

The secret of Vallathol's charm lay in his perennial youthfulness. Most of us stop growing mentally when we are old. Many do so in middle age; some, in youth itself. But Vallathol never ceased growing.

In his early years he wrote in Sanskrit, or in Sanskrit metre, which was then in fashion. Soon he fell under the spell of the gay, delightful and preposterous Venmani. Before long he realised that Venmani's poetry, with all its beauty, lacked content; and Kalidasa became his model. "Not until Kalidasa's technique is imported into Malayalam," said Vallathol, "will our pride in our language cease to be unreal." In his forties Vallathol turned away from Sapskrit models to Dravida metres. Then, indeed he "warbled his native wood-notes wild" and his poetry came nearest to folk music.

Vallathol's themes, too, began to be drawn more and more from the people, so much so that he came to be known as the People's Poet. He had a social sense.



His travels to Europe and, in particular, in Russia when he was in his sixties gave a new dimension to his vision; and his fervent nationalism gave way to a benign internationalism.

Yet at heart he remained a Keralite. He was not afraid to be, or to behave like, a simple Keralite even while entertaining the most sophisticated foreigners. When a delegation of Russian writers came to India, the one place which they were more anxious to see than any other was Kalamandalam in Cheruthuruthi, which was established by Vallathol as a centre for the development of our indigenous arts and culture. Vallathol received them in his loincloth and gave them a typically Keralite reception. The food he served, too, was Keralite. Consisting of tender coconuts, sugar cane juice, fried bananas and gingelly cakes and other delicacies, which he lavished on them, it was typically Keralite in character. Nothing pleased, or would have pleased, the Russians better.

"Let our minds thrill with pride at the name of India," said Vallathol, "but let our blood course through our veins at the sound of Kerala." Charity begins at home.. So, to Vallathol, did poetry. But it did not end there. His poetry embraced all mankind so much so that the premier poet of Kerala has also an honoured place among universal poets.

□ □ □

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Devotees rejoice at the sight of their Lord in different moods and in different alankarams. The Lord, who is above gunas and above avasthas, is neither afflicted nor afflictible.....But His devotees experience Him in themselves....Hence the anxiety of the gopies that the thorns in the bushes might hurt His tender feet, even though they know well that He is none other than Narayana who has come down at the request of Brahma for the sole purpose of protecting the entire Universe.

It is no wonder therefore that devotees wish to imagine and see Lord Venkateswara relaxed and happy, ready to give them permanent riches and well-being (achalaam sriyam).

This is the significance of the Unjal seva conducted daily in Thirumala in the Iyna Mahal, (hall of mirrors). This seva is done every day in the evenings after 6 p.m. The Utsava Murti with full ornaments is placed on a gaily decorated Unjal along with His consorts. Gandha and chamara Upacharas are given to Him and the Unjal is swung slowly to the accompaniment of Veda-parayana, music etc.

Grihasthas who wish to participate in this half an hour function can do so by purchasing tickets for Rs. 1,000/-. Six members of the family can attend and after the seva a gold pendant weighing 5 grams with the Lord's image embossed on it and vastra bahu-manam will be presented to the Grihastha. Darsan of the Mula Murti will also be arranged for the party.

*Executive Officer*

**/ THIRUMALA - TIRUPATI DEVASTHANAMS**  
**TIRUPATI**



# Trenchant Wit of a Saint-Reformer

M. K. SANOO

Sri Narayana Guru, a saint reformer of Kerala, was a man of few words. Solitude had its charm for him. Even in the midst of a crowd he often appeared as though he was enjoying the peace of a lonely cave. He has never been known to indulge in hollow talk.

His conversations have not all been properly recorded and have not received adequate attention. A selection from the recorded few is given below, excerpted from *Narayana Guru* by M. K. Sanoo, a Bhavan's publication.

**SWAMI** was camping at Chengannur when an oracle appeared before Swami. He was trembling all over in the usual way of oracles possessed by the deity they claim to represent. Many people gathered at the place. The man was of heavy build but had lost all his teeth.

The man asked Swami: Do you know who I am?

Swami: You appear to be a stout loafer.

The oracle: What? Are you laughing at me? Do you want to see any proof?

Swami (with a smile): I would like to see a tooth in your mouth.

The oracle and the spectators together burst out laughing.





When people were assembling to discuss the opening of a model school at Sivagiri one of the inmates said: People can achieve great things if they come together.

Swami: They can if they join together.

Inmate: Somebody once remarked that all the Englishmen would be drowned if all the Indians spat together.

Swami: That is true, but the mouth becomes dry on seeing an Englishman.

\* \* \* \* \*

Referring to Vasishta's refusal to recognize Viswamitra (a Kshatriya) as a Brahmarshi even after he achieved divine powers of creation by hard penance, Swami said:

Vasishta was a Brahmin and Viswamitra a Kshatriya. The distance between them was only one inch. See how much a Kshatriya had to struggle to cross this one inch and become a Brahmin. What would be the fate of the lower castes who were metres away?"

\* \* \* \* \*

Swami was travelling by train. His conversation inspired respect in a Raja and a Namboodiri who were travelling in the same compartment. The Raja asked him: What is your name?

Swami: Narayanan.

Raja: Caste?

Swami: Can't you know that by sight?

Raja: No.

Swami: If it cannot be known by seeing how can it be known by hearing?

\* \* \* \* \*

Swami asked a disciple who had returned from Burma:

Are there idols in Buddhist shrines?

Disciple: More than are found in Hindu temples.

Swami: It is like clipping the hair. The more it is clipped, the more and quicker its growth. The Buddha prohibited idols and they have proliferated.

\* \* \* \* \*

A devotee: In monasteries in the Hindustani regions the teachers and disciples sit together for food. We can also follow that practice.

That day Swami dined along with the disciples. Swami was nowhere to be seen at dinner time the next day. He was somewhere on the hill in deep meditation. The disciples had taken their food before he came back.

Swami: Let us all have our food.



Devotee: We have already taken our food. We could not find you here.

Swami: It is not enough to test the teacher. The disciple also should undergo the test.

\* \* \* \* \*

Swami to a member of the Gurudevabhakta Sangham:

"Cleanliness is most important. Everyone should bathe in the morning and wash his clothes. The whole family should bathe. This is what you should preach hereafter.

Member: The labourers who go for work early may find it difficult to observe this. They may not get time.

Swami: They can have time for it. When they defecate they do not postpone a wash for want of time. Cleaning the teeth and washing should be made part of the daily routine along with that.

Physical cleanliness will ensure cleanliness in the matter of food and habitation, and all other cleanliness would follow. One who has achieved this can achieve anything. Those who bathe should join together and keep away those who do not bathe.

\* \* \* \* \*

Conversation between Swami and a learned man deputed by

Mahatmaji to obtain Swami's views on the Vaikom Satyagraha in 1923.

Scholar: There is no connection between the present Satyagraha and temple entry. Right of movement is the present objective.

Swami: For the present you want to go near the temple. Once that is allowed, you could press for entry. Is it so?

Scholar: No. Temple entry is an entirely different issue.

Swami: Temple entry should have been there in its order. Efforts should be for "Sameepya" after "Salokya" and it should continue till "Sayujya." You should not leave things half-done.

\* \* \* \* \*

Talking to an inmate about Mahatmaji's speech at the Vaikom Satyagraha, Swami said:

Is not Gandhiji saying that everything can succeed by penance?

Inmate: Yes.

Swami: Why is the Satyagraha not succeeding?

Inmate: It may be that the strength of the penance is deficient. Success is sure if it is true Satyagraha.



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**Swami:** Can everyone become a true Satyagrahi? Is it possible?

**Inmate:** It is considered very difficult.

**Swami:** Success should be assured if one is a true Satyagrahi. In that case there would be no need to blame the poor people who suffer and starve in the hot sun.

\* \* \* \* \*

**Swami:** There is not much to learn in Vedanta. This visible world is not different from the true essence in the same way as

a wave is not different from the sea.

**Inmate:** This is learnt easily, but forgotten.

**Swami:** This should not be forgotten. The knowledge should be maintained by daily practice.

**Inmate:** What is the gain in taking the trouble of maintaining the knowledge? One can as well keep quiet.

**Swami:** The same fallacy that makes an unreal world appear real affects this question also. □ □ □

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by M. K. SANOO

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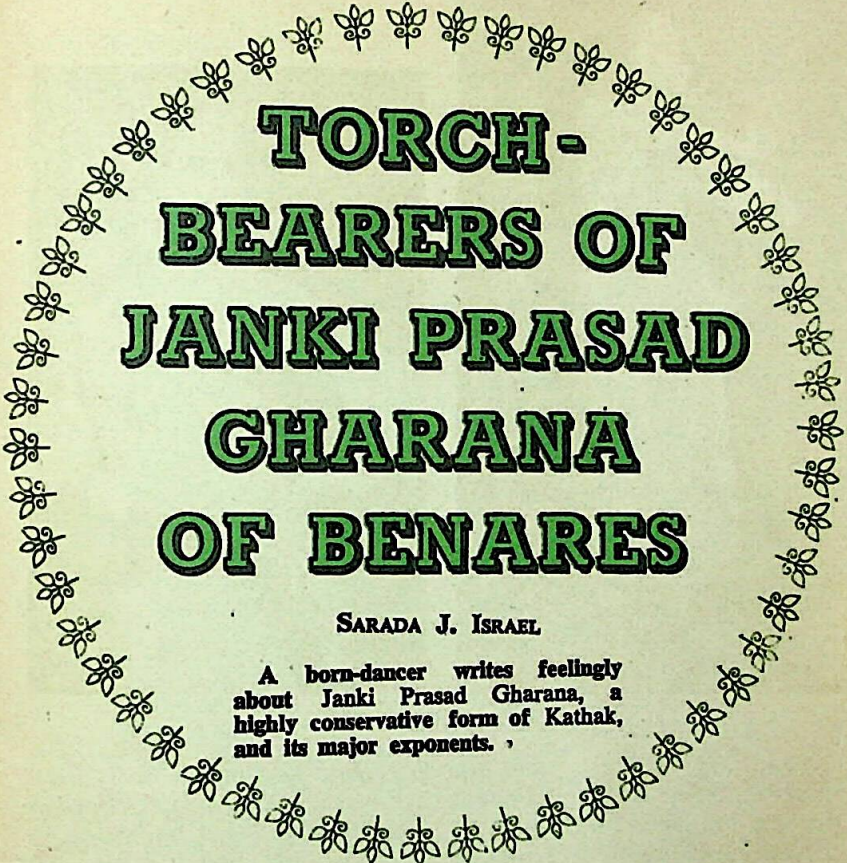
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highly conservative form of Kathak,  
and its major exponents.

**T**HE awareness of the rhythm in the universe dawned on me as a child, rather I grew up with it. My native village was my universe, and the peasants, labourers, the sights and the sounds around me were my inspiration. I saw this rhythm in creation with awe and wonder.

The natural gait of women balancing the pots of water on their heads, their hips swinging and swaying as they walked gracefully to and from the village

tank was a sight I could never miss. With the first rays of the sun touching the earth I would ensconce myself on the rock at the back of my house and wait for the jingle of the ankle bells fade away into the far distance.

Then there were women transplanting on the rice terraces, singing while they moved onwards in a rhythm; their arched bodies straightening now and then.





**Smt. Sunayana Hazarilal**

How often have I heard the plaintive notes of the cowherd playing his pipe as the cattle moved lazily in the pastures! My body swayed to these tunes and my feet beat the rhythm as the farmer's son beat the drum to drive away the birds from the fields ready for harvesting.

*The swaying of the rice plants in the gentle breeze, the soft ripple of the river wending its way through the rocks, the clouds sailing in the sky—all gave me an instinctive knowledge of the rhythm of dance.*

I loved all these sights and sounds, shapes and beauty and

my close association with these aroused such feelings and emotions in me that I felt it necessary to understand them and learn to evoke them.

I began to contemplate. My heart throbbed at every sight in my village and my restless spirit could not be quietened.

Finally I decided that the upsurge of feelings and emotions had to be schooled and disciplined.

Thus my search for the means of developing this instinct of rhythm and dance began very early in life despite the fact that I had to pursue my academic



education. At the same time I knew dance was my life though not my profession.

As my family moved from place to place I was exposed to different styles of classical dancing. This proved a blessing in disguise when I made my final choice.

I joined the "Kathakas"—the community of dancers. "Katha" or story-telling in the form of dance, I thought, would give me ample scope to invoke the feelings and emotions as demanded by the characters.

Ever since the day when I was initiated into Kathak classical dance at the feet of my guru

and I still fathom deep into this form of dance.

I practise dance regularly and read about it. This constant touch with this art has given me inspiration to look into the past, into the humble, yet great lives of the torch-bearers who have kept alive this form of dance.

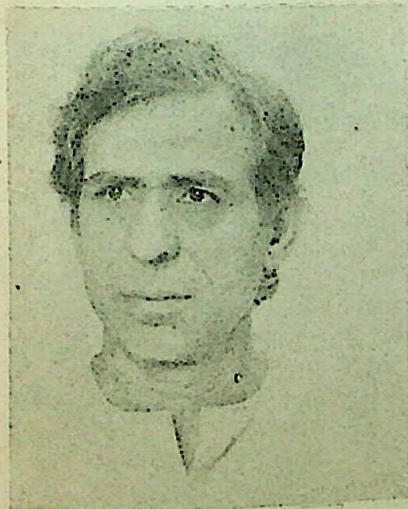
Many are the known and unknown gurus who, in spite of the odds, pursued this art. Some were scholars in Sanskrit, but some did not even have the basic education in Sanskrit. Some were lucky to receive royal patronage, some were not. Yet they were all storehouses of oral and Sastric tradition and handed over this art to their children and students.

So my urge to unfold the story of this Gharana—The Janki Prasad Gharana—will not be out of place and time.

Before I begin the story proper, let me enumerate why my choice fell on this style.

What struck me as distinct was the exclusive compositions in "Natwari bols" (dance syllables) used in this Gharana (Natwara—Krishna, the supreme dancer). The 'Natwari' syllables are "ta, tei, tat, digidigi, t'ram, tigda, tatakuka, tarr, check", etc. The 'Natwari bols' are composed by the dancers themselves and not by the percussionists.

With the syllables the style and the body movements change.



**Guru Hazarilal**

Hazari Lal of the highly conservative Janki Prasad Gharana, I have not looked back. Twelve long years are like yesterdays



The weight on the syllables varies and hence the dance acquires a unique style.

These "Natwari bols" are lyrical and smooth-flowing and so the movements of the body acquire these characteristics.

In "Nritta" (pure dance) items, the body line is maintained even in "Drut" or fast tempo. The "Chakkars" (pirouettes) are minimum and the foot-work is intricate. In the foot-work, heel is used more as in "tigda dig dig." What is remarkable is not the speed but the intricately interwoven rhythm and "laya" (speed) variations. There are also distinct postures and movements of hand and body in this Gharana (Angachalan).

Among the items of "Abhinaya" (expression) the ones done in the sitting posture are still taught and danced by dancers as it was done in the past. "Abhinaya" and "Nritta" items occupy an equal position in their dance recital.

"Taat"—a decorative dance in which there are graceful attitudes or postures and gliding movements—is a speciality of this school of dance. Through "taat" atmosphere and mood are created right from the beginning. Also by means of "taat" and "Farsh bandi" the dancer covers the whole stage through graceful movements. Thus there is a gradual unfolding of the

artiste's personality as a dancer and this is the distinct feature of this Gharana.

In the past, most of the dancers of this school of Kathak were employed in the courts of the Hindu Kings and so their dance reflected the Hindu thought and philosophy. Dance was also adopted as a medium for worship and devotion.

A glimpse into the past has given me an idea how these special characteristics were evolved and maintained by the highly devoted artists of the past and the present. The path I look back on is long but as I retread this path I halt here and there at every milestone and recall with admiration some of the anecdotes in the life and the work of the men and women who have kept this art alive.

### *Gharana—Origin and Growth*

The bride's father slipped a small piece of paper into the groom's hands. He also whispered into his ear, "With this, my boy, you will make a fortune."

The man to be married was Janki Prasad, a bright young man. And the piece of paper he received was "dowry." In it was written the syllables of a "today" (a rhythmic pattern of a pure dance).

When Janki Prasadji saw what the piece of paper contained, he



promptly tore it to pieces. Indeed! It was an insult to one so proficient and so promising. Surely, he could compose his own "todas."

With that even his plans for life changed. He decided to remain a bachelor all his life.

Janki Prasadji, then, left Bikaner and settled in Benares.

He was a Sanskrit scholar and studied the Sastras. In Benares he started teaching Kathak. He believed that every form of art must have its own vehicles of expression.

Thus he composed the rhythmic patterns consisting of 'Natwari bols' alone and also composed "Paramelu" pieces in which there is a clever blending of the sound syllables of various percussion instruments with "Natwari bols."

"Drag jagere drag jagere jang jang tak....."

He also emphasised that even in the fast tempo the delineation of the body should be maintained neat and exact. He was a pioneer in this new style of Kathak, hence the Gharana is named the Janki Prasad Gharana or Benares Gharana.

He had many students including his nephew Sablaji. Later Sablaji taught Kathak to his sons Hukumaji and Motilalji. Motilalji served as a dancer in the court of Maharaja Doongarsinghji of Bikaner and for his

meritorious service in the field of dance he received a village as an award.

Hukumaji taught his sons Dularam and Ganeshilal.

Ganeshilal also became a dancer in the court of Bikaner where Maharaja Doongarsinghji extended his patronage just as he had done to his uncle.

The name of Biharilalji, son of Dularam, is remembered for



Shri Biharilalji

his rare compositions as much as for his "Abhinaya" and footwork. He served in the court of Indore.

Biharilalji came down to Bombay and among his students the name of Menaka Shirodkar cannot be missed. The others were Mohanlalji from Benares, Hira-



lalji and Pyrelalji from Jaipur Gharana and Keshav Rao More. Sukhdev, a singer from Rajasthan, was also his student.

As a dancer he worked in Gandharv Natak Company of Bal Gandharv where Ustad Ahmed—Jan Tirakwa accompanied him on Tabla.

He danced the compositions in Trital (16 beats) in "Vilambit laya" (slow speed) of 64 beats. In the vocabulary of Kathak dancers "ta" is slow, "doon" is twice the speed of "ta" and "chaughan" is four times the speed of "ta." Biharilalji was so proficient in technique that he danced the compositions in the "chaughan" speed when the basic speed of the tabla player was "Vilambit."

He loved his drink too. Many an evening under the influence of liquor his compositions flowed more glibly. His friends and admirers uttered delightful cries of "Wah! Wah!" as they noted down the compositions secretly.

But Biharilalji was not to be fooled. Drunk he was, but not too drunk to lose his sobriety. He tied the "ganda" (a thread tied to the wrist of some one to demand loyalty as a student) and in this way many students came into his fold. He equally kept up his promise and taught them Kathak with care and precision.

Biharilalji's sons, Kishanalji,

Mohanlalji and Sohanlalji became dancers of great merit. Mohanalalji wrote Tumris.

Biharilalji had two brothers—Hiralalji and Puranalji.

Hiralalji was a dancer in Indore Durbar which was one of the biggest Durbars of the time. When dressed in goldlaced Sherwani, Churidar and Shera, Hiralalji was often mistaken for a Raja. He was tall and handsome. He was a contemporary of Binda Din Maharaj and wrote Tumris.

Puranalji also learnt Kathak from his father. It is said that as a boy he wanted to appear in the Durbar as a dancer but his elder brothers who had already established themselves as dancers refused to present him in the Durbar. Yet Puranalji was not disappointed. He spent 12 long years in austere training and baffled his brothers and all present in the Durbar with his perfect mastery over the Kathak idiom. Ganeshlalji had three sons, Hanuman Prasadji, Sivalji and Gopal Das.

Hanuman Prasadji, the eldest son, served as a dancer in the palace of the Maharaja of Kashmir, Pratap Singhji. Later he lived in the court of His Highness Ganga Singh Maharaj. He perfected the art from his father, but his forte was "Bhakti Bhav", which had depth and purity.



Death of his only son at the age of six came as a blow to him but Hanuman Prasadji's un-



Shri Hanuman Prasadji

daunted spirit enabled him to pass on the tradition of this Gharana to his eldest daughter's sons, Naval Kishoreji, Bhansilalji and Onkar Prasadji, all of whom became dance masters later.

An anecdote in his life throws light on his art.

In the court of the Maharaja of Patiala a conference on music and dance was held. Many artists were invited to perform before an august gathering. Hanuman Prasadji's fat body made no impact on the musi-

cians who were to accompany him. Dubious glances were exchanged as he was asked to perform on the last day which was an important day of the conference.

As the lines———*Jaati nagariya mei bhooli re dagariya ab sudha lo mere Ram* ..

flowed, his whole being was transformed into an embodiment of feeling and emotion. Some people from the audience even got up from their seats to make way for him to pass. Such was the impact of his "Abhinaya."

The credit of opening the first dance school "Sangeet Bharati" in Delhi goes to him. He also taught Kathak there. With him was his student Nirmala Joshi.

Hanuman Prasadji died at a ripe age of 80 in the year 1950.

Gopal Das, Hanuman Prasadji's brother, was a dancer in the court of Maharaja of Patiala.

If the seeds of Janki Prasad Gharana were sown in Benares and sprouted there, it was transplanted in Patiala. It is here this style of Kathak flowered and bore fruit. Gopal Dasji contributed a great deal to the preservation and spread of this style in the whole of Punjab. He taught Kathak to many students there and also in Lahore where he lived later.

Gopal Dasji's "bhav" was exceptional and rare. When he danced in the court, the people

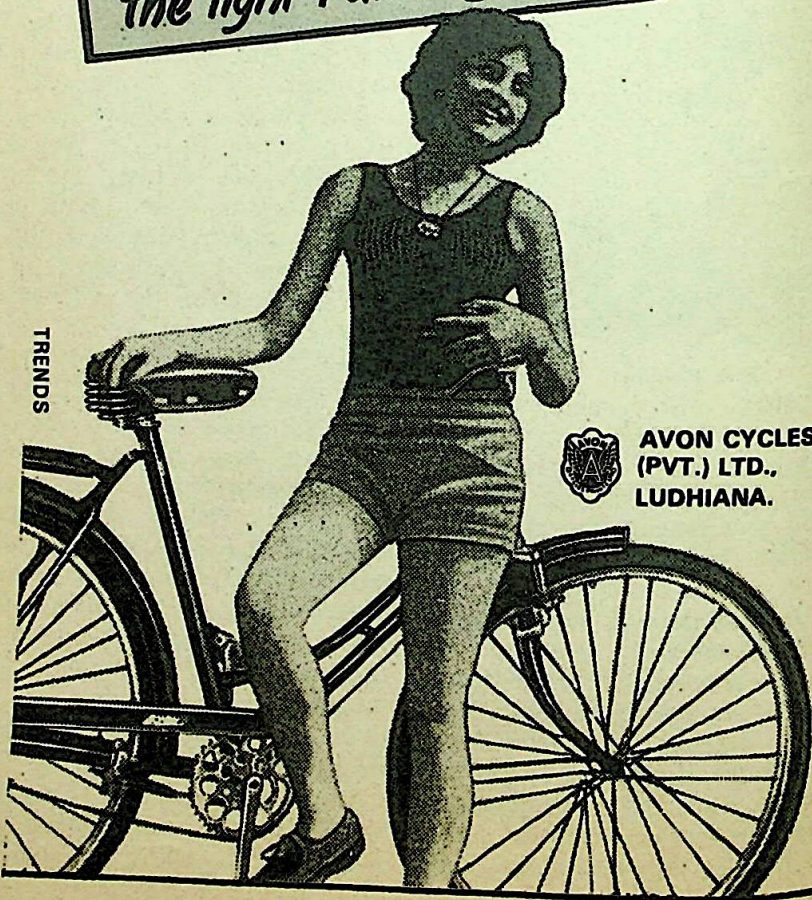


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at his back enjoyed as much as those in front of him. So powerful was his "Angik Abhinaya" (showing expression with bodily movement).

His students include Nawab Putli, Mira Bux and Bhurre Khan (Ashiq Hussain) whom he adopted as a son. Ginan Shankerji who used to accompany him on tabla also became a dance master later.

Gopal Dasji was a hard task master. It is said that while Ashiq Hussain and other students practised "tatkar" (foot-work) he used to wave a stick on the floor below their feet so that his students acquired the quickness in foot-work.

Nawab Putli of Patiala as a dancer excelled in style and technique. Her fame spread far and wide, not only in Punjab but also in other cities like Bombay. She was invited by rich men to dance on special occasions like marriage ceremonies.

She was dark and plain-looking. A shy and simple girl, she was always dressed in simple clothes, not in fashion. The figure she cut could hardly make any one guess what a mettle she was made of.

As a dancer very few at that time could equal her. She was a rare perfection. Her "mudras" (hand-gestures) were neat and perfect. Her movements were graceful and her "Abhi-

naya" (depiction) was simple, direct and artistic mirroring a world of emotions and moods of the characters.

Her "Mayur Nritta" (Peacock-dance) was unique. She also gained such mastery over her foot-work that she could move all or any number of Ghunguroos (ankle bells) or none at all according to her will.

Ashiq Hussain came under the influence of Gopal Das very



Shri Ashiq Hussain

early in life. Ashiq Hussain's hand bore the tattoo mark "Jyothi Prasad," the name Gopalji gave him as his adopted son. As a dancer Ashiq Hussain excelled in this style of Kathak. Endowed with a handsome bearing and good looks and his mastery over the Kathak idiom, Ashiq Hussain at once drew people to him. The movements of his palms and fingers



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were most noteworthy. With a far-away look in his eyes, my Guruji recalls, "It was like the movement of the gentle waves." His dark eyes shared the depth of feelings and his movements in "Nritya" items were quick and graceful.

When he used to recite the syllables of a "toda" to the accompaniment of the Tabla, his clear words were a melody to the ear. The applause was immediate and spontaneous. To this he used to pass his fingers through his wavy black hair. His "Farsh bandi toda" was a special feature of his performance.

Ashiq Hussain also danced difficult patterns with grace and precision. For instance, he danced to the accompaniment of different Tabla players, playing four different "tals" (measurement of time consisting of the basic number of syllables). When he reached the climax his "sum" (first beat of the time measure) coincided with the "Sum" of each of the Tabla players. For this the title "Nritya Samrat" was conferred was conferred on him by Alla Dha Khan, the great singer in the presence of many artists.

Late in life-Gopal Das had a son. He is Krishna Kumar. As he lost his father when he was a year and a half, Krishna Kumar received his training in Kathak from his father's brother,

Hanuman Prasadji, and later from Mohan Lalji. He then came to Bombay and continued his training under the care of Ashiq Hussain.

### *The Guardians of Tradition*

Krishna Kumar came under the influence of Rama Vallabji,



Shri Krishna Kumar

a great Sanskrit scholar in Bareilly. He earned the title "Rajasthan Natraj" at the Calcutta conference. From then onwards his fame as a dancer spread far and wide in all the cities of U.P. and Bengal.

His work in Sangeet Natak Academy included Dance drama. Success came to him as Madhav in *Malti Madhav*, as Shiva in *Kumar Sambhav* and as Nawab Wajid Ali Shah in *Shane Avad*. He excelled in foot-work and "Satwik Abhinaya." He also composed the ballets *Taj Ki*



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Even today Krishna Kumar's dance is a rare treat to watch for he introduces new items in every performance. He maintains Kathak as an extempore art as it should be. His "Abhinaya" projects life with all its moods and passions.

Can anyone do justice speaking of one's own Guru? Especially when you feel you know so much about him, and yet there is much more to be known.

But with courage I take up this task of throwing some light on the life of my Guru Hazarilal who not only taught me Kathak but also revealed the long and arduous struggle he had to go through as a bearer of this fine tradition.

Guru Hazarilal was born in Rampura Phulpura in Rajasthan. He belonged to a family of businessmen. Father having died early in life, his brother Sohan with his artistic bent of mind introduced him to Ashiq Hussain. Guruji was six years old when he stepped into the portals of this dance master. He immediately took up to Kathak as a vocation for his future life. Business is not in his blood even today.

That was the time when "Guru-Shishya Parampara" was a sacred bond in which the pupil attended to the needs of

his master and the master in turn taught his pupil the art. Guruji, thus, underwent a rigorous training in Kathak till he reached the age of 16.

Ashiq Hussain was a kind-hearted man but a stern master. Guruji recalls, "There were days when I practised 'tatkar' the whole day except for three to four hours when I had my meals. My hair was gathered and tied to the ceiling lest I should relax."

From the age of 16 Guruji started dancing in well-attended conferences in Punjab.

Then came the change in the political scene of the country. In spite of the upheaval, Guruji continued to practise in the seclusion of his home under the guidance of Ashiq Hussain.

The events that followed the attainment of Independence and partition of the country separated many a dancer from his Guru. Ashiq Hussain decided to make Pakistan his home and hoped that Guru Hazarilal would follow suit.

Ashiq Hussain's desire was genuine. He had developed an attachment to Guru Hazarilal as a father to a son. Another important thing was that he had seen a future in this young dancer.

But Ashiq Hussain's family had contemplated other plans. Why not a marriage alliance with



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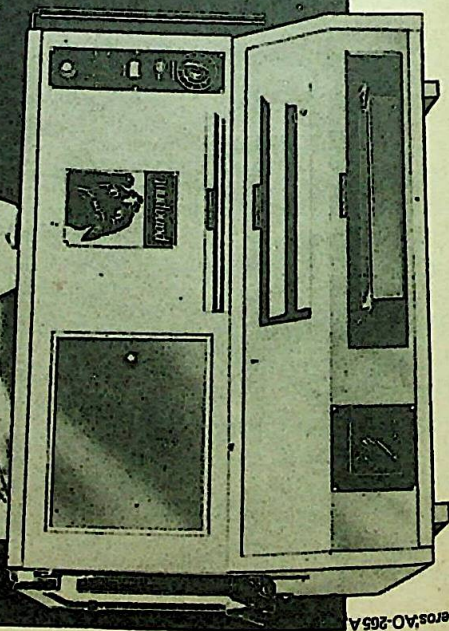
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a girl from their family? This bond would bring them still closer. But Guru Hazarilal had no such plans.

He then took leave of his master and left for Poona where he started giving private tuitions in Kathak.

Guru in those days insisted on stern training but the nuances of the art were rarely handed over to their pupils. Guru Hazarilal's experience proved contrary to this.

Ashiq Hussain himself used to practise in great secret. Even the Tabla players accompanying him were asked to pay "Gurudakshina" (fee) as it was thought that the Tabla players learning the compositions later became dance masters themselves. The pupils would peep through the ventilators, unnoticed, to watch their Guru practising.

That was way back when Guru Hazarilal was not yet ten.

Now Guru Hazarilal feels deeply indebted to the parting gift he received from his master before he left for Pakistan.

So Guruji then in Poona, came down to Bombay to meet Ashiq Hussain for the last time. By that time Hussain had become reconciled to the idea that his pupil would stay back in India.

The final meeting took place in London Bar at Grant Road (now Railway Restaurant). It

lasted for an hour only, but, for Guruji it was an experience of a life-time.

Ashiq Hussain gave him his final lesson, a parting gift from which Guruji learnt the finer points of Janki Prasad School of Kathak. In Guruji's own words, "What I learnt in that one hour I had not learnt in all the years of my training." But not without one promise. He extracted a promise from Guruji that the responsibility of preserving, nurturing and spreading this style of Kathak in India lay on his shoulders.

From that day Guru Hazarilal dedicated himself to this task. Yet he had his moments of temptation when he succumbed to the lure of films but deep in his mind somewhere a voice kept reminding him the words of his master.

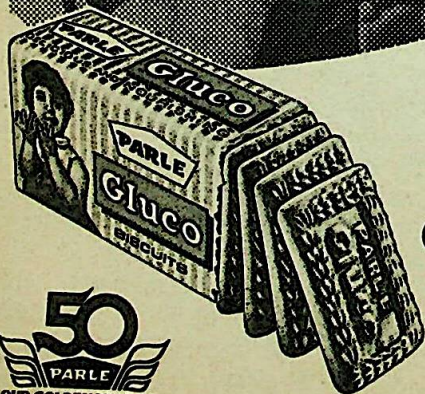
Thus his brief spell in the celluloid world was over when he completely devoted himself to Kathak classical dance.

While in Poona Guru Hazarilal had many students. He also taught students in Wadia College. Later he came to Bombay and since then he has been teaching Kathak at Bhartiya Vidya Bhavan.

Some of the students who have made a mark in this field include Bala Saheb Gokhle, Sneha Prabha Pradhan, Sunayana, Sudarshan Kumar,



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Odissi dancer Sanjukta Panigrahi, Kuchipudi dancer Kama-deva, Chandrakanth, Jeevankala, Rohini Wagle and Siddhi Jhaveri.

Among the students at Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan there was a frail-looking girl full of verve and instinctive knowledge of rhythm and expression. This is no other than Sunayana, now an exponent of Janki Prasad School of Kathak.

Born in Bareilly in a conservative Gujarati family, Sunayana had her schooling in Benares. As a girl she had a flair for singing and her mother encouraged her to learn singing. Her father D. C. Desai, then serving in the Railways, was transferred from place to place but Sunayana stayed back in Benares with her grand parents.

Later she lived in Bangalore where she learnt Bharat Natyam.

After graduating from Wadia College, Poona, she came down to Bombay where her father was posted.

It was at this time her life underwent a great change. She became a student of Guru Hazarilal and at the same time continued her lessons in Bharata Natyam. Then her choice fell on Kathak for which she devoted all her time. She also learnt singing from Shri Agni and Shri Arolkar.

And came the turning in her life. Her marriage to Guru Hazarilal in 1961 changed the whole course of her artistic life much to the consternation of her orthodox parents. The angry parents tried to wean her away before the inevitable happened but Sunayana's iron will enabled her to accept the role as Guru Hazarilal's better-half and thus became 'wedded to Kathak.

Indeed! there were many ups and downs in the path she took but she continued her training under the stern eye of her Guru-husband. The estrangement from her family and the comfortable life she left behind did not alter her plans.

Her major show came off in 1964 at the Tejpal auditorium in Bombay. From then onwards it was "a life full of expectation and fulfilment. Since then she has been performing at home and abroad.

A purist to the core, Sunayana does not make any compromises. The degree of conception and execution seems to rise with every performance.

Yet Sunayana is modest. She does not talk about herself. When coaxed she confided, "I do not exactly know when I decided to be a professional dancer." She still considers herself to be a student and she has gained mastery of foot-work, "Angachalan" and "Abhinaya."



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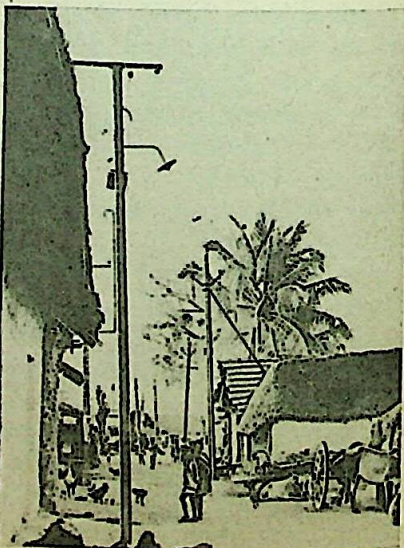
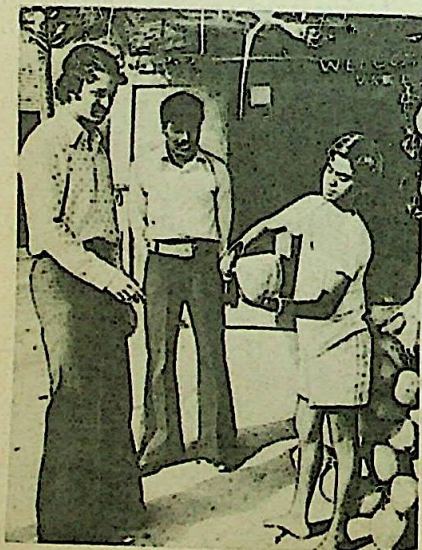
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There is a certain amount of depth, beauty of line and an elevating quality in her performance.

Sunayana also assists her Guru-husband in teaching the students. She has a number of compositions to her credit and these strictly fall within the classical framework.

As a student I ask my guru Harilal: "What is the importance of Gharana in the present context?" He replies, "Gharana is a tradition in classical art which has evolved through generations in a family and has distinctive features of style. The name of the place is not important. What is important is the style which is the pride of the generations in a family. By coming down the generations the style attains a shape and perfection and the style is nurtured and preserved with a high sense of duty and dedication. It has a long background and history and thus stands on a firm foundation and shines out as something unique. Thus our ancient culture is preserved." He paused thoughtfully and added, "But in the present day when some claim to be the originators of a Gharana, it has no importance."

"What is the future of this Janki Prasad Gharana?" I ask next.

His reply is immediate and spontaneous.

"The future is bright with so many students taking up this

Gharana," he continues. "The dazzling foot-work and lightning 'Chakkars' are not a criterion for distinction. Only if this is understood Kathak classical dance will be learnt in the true sense. The lost values of 'Angachelan' and 'Abhinaya' should replace the gimmicry and gallery appeal."

Finally I ask, "What advice do you have to offer to your students?"

His reply: "The students should learn the fundamentals practice coupled with discipline of classical dance with rigorous and dedication but they should develop their own individuality. Thus the temptation to imitate the mannerisms of their gurus is minimised."

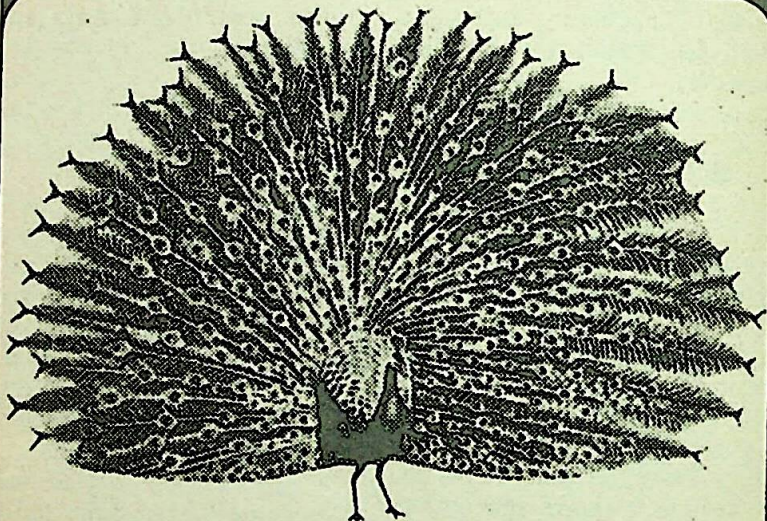
There was sincerity in the reply of this highly dedicated guru who himself rises above all these wordly guiles and devotes himself to the propagation of this Gharana.

Today there are numerous pupils who have taken up to this school of Kathak and there are many who admire it. So let the dancers of today and tomorrow imbibe the fine qualities of this tradition. Whether they are pupils coming from the direct line of descent of these families or they belong to the line of succession of the master-pupil tradition—all have equal share in keeping the flame of this art form ever burning brightly.



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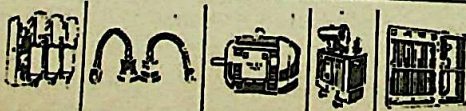
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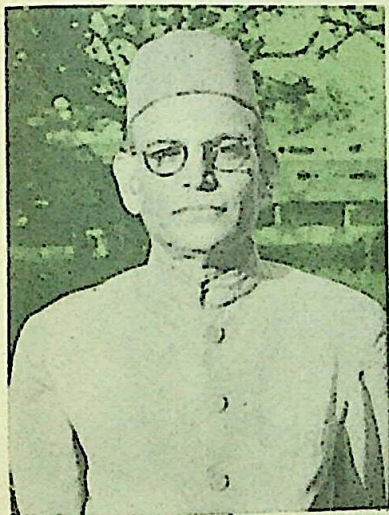
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# FUTURE OF SERVANTS OF INDIA SOCIETY



D. ANJANEYULU

Few People are aware of the existence and activities of the Servants of India Society—that institution of selfless workers founded by Gopal Krishna Gokhale. Here is a scintillating interview with its new President, Shri S. R. Venkataraman

**Shri S. R. Venkataraman**  
President, Servants of India Society

**PUBLIC** exhortations for service and sacrifice have never been wanting in this country. But one wonders how many educated young men, now in their twenties, have heard of the Servants of India Society. Nor will it be surprising to realise that about the only acceptable avenues for public service that they could think of are those with a four-figure salary as a start! Neither the dominant values of today nor the examples of elders before them would let them think otherwise.

A four-figure or even a five-figure salary could have been theirs, if only they would say

'yes,' but neither Gopal Krishna Gokhale nor V. S. Srinivasa Sastri cared to look at public service in those terms. Like William Pitt the younger, both of them died poor. It was with a view to training a selfless, devoted and intelligent band of workers that the 'Servants of India' was founded by Gokhale on June 12, 1905. Informed patriotism was what he aimed at, with the accent on quality and not on numbers.

The Servants of India started with a membership of about 15 or so, and after 73 years, the number remains almost the same. It may not have exceed-





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ed 30 at any given point of time. There are only six offices of the Society in all, with the headquarters in Poona and the branches in Bombay, Nagpur, Allahabad, Madras and Cuttack. All the three organs of public opinion, under its control, *The Servant of India Bulletin*, *Inana Prakash* (Marathi)—both from Poona—and the *Hitavada* (English) daily from Nagpur, have now ceased publication. There is, therefore, practically no medium of organised publicity now left at its disposal. The Gokhale School of Economics and Politics is about the only major educational institution at the national level now managed under its auspices.

In the new concept of public life, just emerging in India under the impact of British liberalism, the founder meant the society as a post-graduate institution of public service. He belonged to a generation fed on the intellectual diet of Mill *On Liberty* and Morley *On Compromise*. The generation which honoured his precept and followed his example included such eminent patriots as V. S. Srinivasa Sastri, Thakkar Bapa, N. M. Joshi, N. A. Dravid, A. V. Patwardhan and G. K. Deodhar. None of them is alive now.

Among those still happily

with us is the octogenarian, Shri S. R. Venkataraman, the new President of the Society, who became a member nearly half-a-century ago. He told me in a talk recently in Madras that there are three other octogenarians among his colleagues. The rest of them are all above 50. Only one of them, most recently enrolled, happens to be in his thirties.

Of monetary or other material inducements, the Society has little to offer its members. They live on a subsistence allowance, which used to be less than a hundred to start with, in the earlier days, and even now does not exceed Rs. 300. The maximum limit in the scale is Rs. 500, which Gandhiji once suggested for Ministers in India.

What was it then that drew the original entrants to the Society in the early days and how can it now recover the lost magic? How is it able to manage its affairs? These and allied questions were agitating my mind and I shared them with the new President who was kind enough to answer them at some length and in some detail.

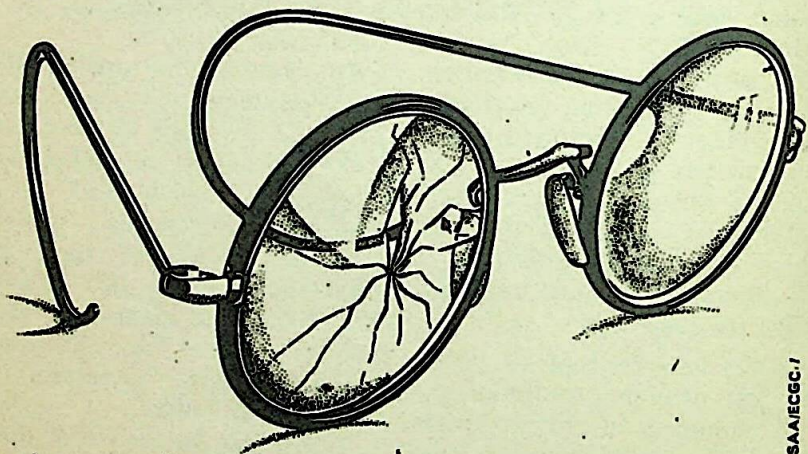
Q. *What made you join the Servants of India Society and who was the main source of your inspiration?*

A. The first two decades of



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this century witnessed a countrywide national awakening and the town of Coimbatore, where I was born and brought up was no exception to it. Several members of my family were enthusiastic supporters of the Swadeshi, National Education and Home Rule Movements. We were also fed upon the nationalistic literature, published by Messrs G. A. Natesan, Ganesh and Ganesan Companies. We had also the advantage of the visit of great leaders like Dr. Annie Besant, Lala Lajpat Rai, Pandit Madan Mohan Malaviya, Poet Rabindranath Tagore, Desabandhu C. R. Das, Mrs. Sarojini Naidu, the Rt. Hon. V. S. Srinivasa Sastri and Mr. C. Rajagopalachari, to name a few. We were greatly influenced by their speeches and writings.

All this had a profound impact on me, when I was in my teens and I felt that I should do my bit for the advancement of the country. I had organised a reading room and library, with lectures by like-minded fellow students on subjects of current interest. I sold the Home Rule flags, and

this was considered an offence by the Government. A nationalist-minded principal of my college, commended my action, but asked me to pay a fine of two Rupees to satisfy the Government. I had also collected funds for the National Education Movement of Dr. Besant, who, in acknowledging receipt of the amount, commended the effort.

I was in the Intermediate Class when I read about Gokhale and the Servants of India Society and decided to join the Society, after completing my education. Some of my patriotic-minded lecturers and local political leaders and social workers also had some influence on me in my decision. Not the least of these influences was that of my eldest brother, the late Shri S. R. Anantanarayanan.

Q. *Do you feel you have fulfilled the aim with which you became a member of the Servants of India Society?*

A. No one can claim that he has fulfilled his life's ambition or the aims and objects of the organisation to which he belongs. As a member of the Society, I





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have worked honestly and sincerely for its objects.

From the institutions under my care in the three Southern States, several thousands of Tribal, Harijan and other Backward Class boys and girls have gone out qualified and trained for their careers. Several of them are well-employed in the Defence Services. There are also lawyers, doctors and members of other learned professions among them. Many others are in white-collar jobs in the Government service.

Through these schools in remote rural and forest areas, we have brought education to their doors. But this is a drop in the ocean. Much more remains to be done. It has to be a continuous process.

Q. *What, according to you, is the present role of the Servants of India Society?*

A. The role of the Society is to raise the level of character and capacity of our people, to promote secularism, root out parochialism and communalism. In all our schools, we admit pupils and appoint teachers belonging to all communi-

ties.

For over half-a-century, the Society has been engaged in promoting the welfare of the rural people. Besides running schools, hostels, dispensaries, housing and agricultural colonies, and implementing other socio-economic programmes in different parts of the country, the Society has plans to run adult literacy centres in rural areas on a large scale, with Central Government's aid and conduct propaganda for family planning.

The problems of children and women are not forgotten by us. Creches, balwadis, and work centres for women are also being planned. The dimension of the job is immense, but dedicated workers with a spirit of service in rural areas are hard to come by, certainly not adequate to the needs.

Q. *Why is the response from the educated youth to the Society so poor nowadays?*

A. Some months ago, we advertised in the newspapers inviting young men with a spirit of dedication to join the Society. We received over 300 applications from graduates and others in



**With firm determination  
and utmost zeal  
We march towards the  
avowed goal...**

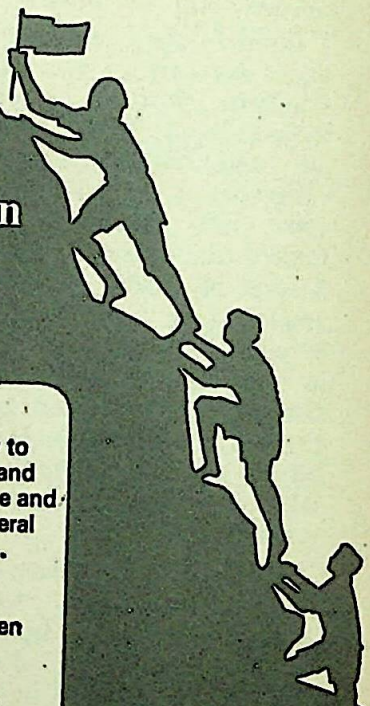
**Let happiness dawn on every one...**

Guaranteeing justice, equality and security to every one and ensuring overall happiness and a respectable life as a matter of right to one and all are the underlying principles of the general policy of the Government of Maharashtra... Naturally, the focal point of the entire socio-economic programme of the State, aimed at its all-out progress, has always been the weaker sections of the society...

In keeping with this, a chain of progressive policies and radical programmes, like land-distribution, construction of houses for houseless, providing basic amenities to slum-dwellers, concessions to economically backward sections, special Tribal Sub-Plan for Adiwasí welfare, cheaper power supply for agriculture, guaranteed fair price for agricultural produce, minimum wages for agricultural labourers, rural employment guarantee scheme, employment generation for educated unemployed, promotion of self-employment, stipend to educated unemployed remaining without employment for four successive years and the like has started in Maharashtra...

The State Government is committed to all its progressive policies and radical programmes. Involvement of the people in their successful implementation is, however, absolutely necessary.

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Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Kerala and Karnataka. A perusal of the applications disclosed a deplorable deficiency in thought and expression.

However, 37 candidates were interviewed, but when they came to know that they had to work on a maintenance allowance, they gave up the idea of joining the Society. We have been able to select five among them, who are expected to join us soon.

The causes of this poor response are many. The system of education, lack of idealism among the students, and waves of excessive freedom and frivolity among the youth are a few of the main causes. Many wanted jobs only in towns, because of their moorings and the amenities of urban life; and felt that the remuneration offered was low; others did not believe in service or sacrifice for the country, particularly in the field of social work.

- Q. *Is there anything you propose to do to infuse new life and vigour into the Society?*
- A. To invigorate the Society, men and money are needed.

Both the Central and State Governments have provided for huge outlays as grants-in-aid to voluntary agencies. The Society proposes to avail itself of this facility to the maximum. But there is a snag. Voluntary agencies are expected to meet ten per cent of the total expenditure, excluding that on management. This is a condition which deters many voluntary agencies from availing themselves of these grants-in-aid.

This ten per cent of contribution, in most cases, has to be met by voluntary agencies from public donations. But unfortunately, the fountains of public charity are drying up, thanks to the various economic measures of the Government. So, each organisation can bite off only as much as it can chew with these incentives, the Society has undertaken socio-economic schemes in several states, involving sums running into several lakhs. This year we have admitted a new member and three probationers, to strengthen the Society. We shall admit a few more, if suitable candidates come forward.





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To make the aims and objects of the Society known to the public we are making arrangements to publicise them through pamphlets dealing with the work done by the Society in various parts of the Country.

Secondly, we propose to enroll what are called associates. These are enrolled from among public men who are in sympathy with the work of the Society and would be prepared to contribute annually a certain sum of money and also assist in its work.

I must confess that in all such things there is bound to be a wide gulf between our aims and achievements. But this should not deflect us from our goal. We hope, with the cooperation of friends and well wishers we will be able to take one step towards that goal.

Mr. Venkataraman, who walks verily in the footsteps of Gokhale, Sastri and Kunzru, is realistic in his approach and modest in his claims for the Society. When we remember that only the sky is the limit for the promises of quite a few other organisations, the gulf between promise and achievement does not seem

all that wide in the case of the Servants of India Society.

All the same, there is urgent need for infusing new blood into the Society, if it is not to end up as a sort of Masonic lodge of old men. And octogenarians and septugenarians are a fast diminishing asset, for we are not yet living in a land of Mathuselahs. On the political side, the Indian Liberal Party, to which Gokhale owed his allegiance, has almost ceased to exist, in spite of some of the intellectual stalwarts in its ranks. The main reason was that it tended progressively to be out of touch with the masses.

But the Servants of India has not really lost its original role or contemporary relevance. It has only lost its effectiveness for want of resources in the shape of the right kind of men and the required extent of material help. The twin aims of political education and social service are as valid and vital today as they were in the early years of this century, perhaps even more today, than ever before. As for the first, we have to educate the masters, so that they might think for themselves, free from recurring bouts of collective psychosis. As for the second, the welfare state has to make the best use of all the voluntary organisations.



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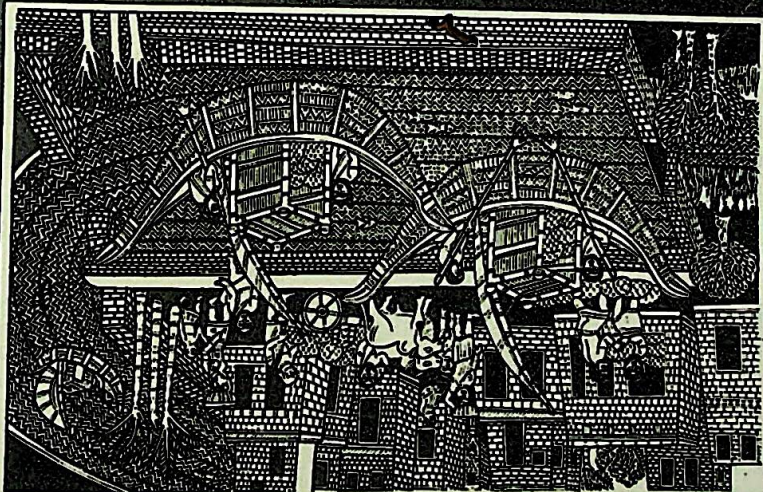
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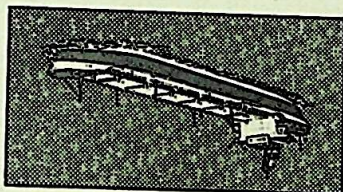




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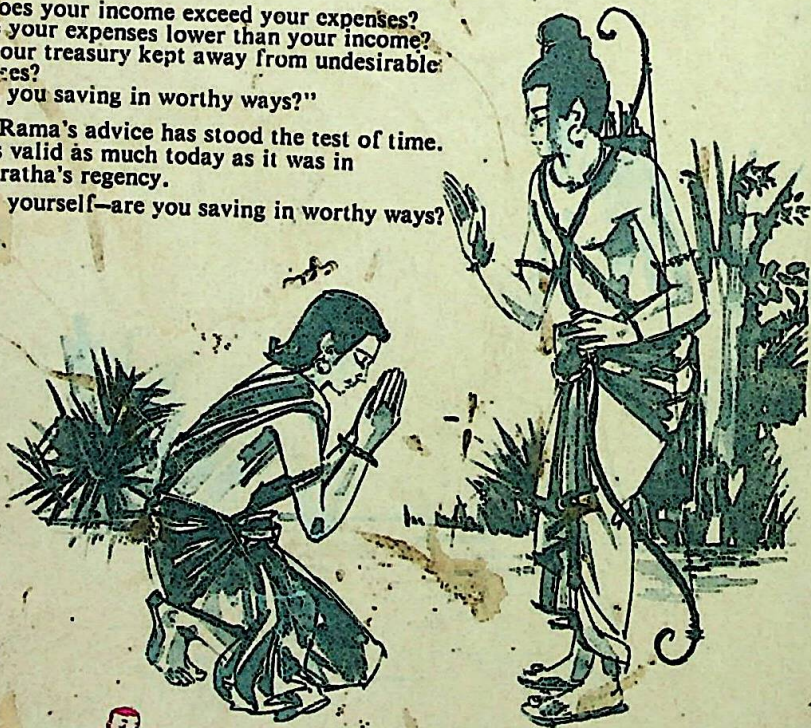
When Bharatha visits him in his forest exile, Sri Rama gently asks, without appearing to advise:

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